

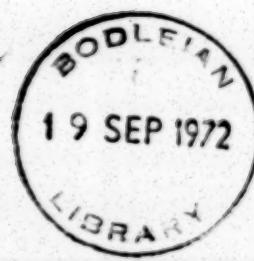
THE
HISTORY
OF THE
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
UNDER
PETER THE GREAT.

BY
M DE VOLTAIRE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. I.

ABERDEEN:
Printed for, and sold by J. BOYLE.
M.DCC.LXXXVII.



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P R E F A C E.

S E C T. I.

WHO could have pretended to say in the year 1700, that a magnificent and polite court would be formed at the extremity of the Gulph of Finland? that the inhabitants of Solikam, Casan, and the banks of the Wolga and Saick, would be ranked amongst our best disciplined troops, and gain victories in Germany, after defeating the Swedes and the Turks; that an empire of two thousand leagues in length, almost unknown to us before, shoudl, in the space of fifty years, become a well-governed state, and extend its influence to all the European courts? and that in 1759, the most zealous patron of learning in Europe, should be a Russian? Any one who had said this, would have passed for the most chimerical mortal upon earth. PETER the GREAT, therefore, who singly planned and executed this amazing and altogether unforeseen revolution, is perhaps, of all princes, the one whose deeds are most worthy of being transmitted to posterity.

The court of Petersburg has furnished the historian, charged with compiling this work, with all the authentic documents. It is said in the body of this history, that these memoirs are deposited in the public library of Geneva, a well-known and frequented city, in the neighbourhood of which the author lives; but as the whole of the instructions and journal of Peter the Great have not yet been communicated to him, he has thought pro-

per to keep these records at his own house ; where the curious may have a sight of them, with as much ease as from the library keeper at Geneva, and the whole shall be deposited there as soon as the second volume is finished.

The public have already several pretended histories of Peter the Great, most of them compiled from news-papers. That which is published at Amsterdam, in four volumes, under the name of the *Boyard Nefeuwancy*, is one of the imitations of the press, which are become too common amongst us. Of this kind are the memoirs of Spain, under the name of *Don Juan de Calmenar*, and the history of Lewis XIV. compiled by *La Motte* the Jesuit, from pretended papers of a minister of state, and ascribed to *La Martinicre*. Such also are the histories of the emperor Charles VI. of prince Eugene, and many others.

In this manner has the noble art of printing been made to serve the purposes of the vilest traffic. A Dutch bookseller orders a book to be wrote, just as a manufacturer gives directions for weaving of a piece of cloth ; and unhappily there are authors to be found, whose necessities oblige them to sell their labours to these dealers like workmen, for hire ; hence arise these insipid panegyrics, and defamatory libels, with which the public is over-run, and is one of the most shameful vices of the age.

Never did history stand more in need of authentic vouchers, than at this time, when so infamous a traffic is made of falsehood. The author who now offers to the public, *The History of the RUSSIAN EMPIRE under PETER the GREAT*, is the same who thirty years ago wrote the history of Charles XII. from the papers of several eminent persons in public stations, who had lived with that

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monarch for a considerable time. The present history is a confirmation of, and supplement to the former.

And here the author thinks himself obliged, out of respect to the public, and a regard to truth, to set to view an undeniable testimony of the degree of credit due to the history of Charles XII.

Not long since, the king of Poland and duke of Lorrain ordered that work to be read over a second time to him at Commercy, when he was struck with the truth of a multitude of facts, to which he himself had been eye witness, and to incensed at the boldness with which certain libellers and journalists had controverted their authenticity, that he resolved to enforce, by the authority of his own testimony, the credit due to the historian; and as it was not proper for him to write himself, he ordered one of the great officers of his houshold, to draw up the following initritment, in form of a certificate *.

“ We lieutenant-general of the king’s armies,
“ grand-marshal of the house-hold to his Polish
“ Majesty, and commandant of Toul, of the
“ Two Bars, &c do hereby certify, that his said
“ Polish Majesty, on hearing read to him the hi-
“ story of Charles XII. written by Mr de V—,
“ (the last Geneva edition) not only recommend-
“ ed the style of that history, and expressed

* Finding himself under a necessity of printing this certificate, the author has only taken the liberty of sparing the reader some expressions which appeared too favourable, being fully sensible that he owes them wholly to the indulgence and goodness of the prince; and for that reason, has confined himself to such parts of it only as give testimony in favour of the truth.

“ his admiration of the strokes which cha-
“ racterise all the writings of that celebrated au-
“ thor ; but has moreover done us the honour of
“ signifying to us, that he was ready to grant a
“ certificate to Mr de V——, for the better ascer-
“ taining the exact truth of the facts contained in
“ that history. His Majesty, at the same time,
“ adding, that Mr de V—— has neither omitted
“ nor misplaced any one fact, or interesting cir-
“ cumstance ; that the whole is agreeable to truth,
“ and every event disposed in its proper order;
“ and that he has spoken of every thing relating
“ to Poland, and the events which happened
“ there, &c. as if he had been an eye-witness.
“ We moreover certify, that his Majesty ordered
“ us to write immediately to Mr de V——, to ac-
“ quaint him with what we had heard, and to as-
“ sure him of his Majesty’s friendship and esteem.

“ The great regard we have for Mr de V——’s
“ reputation, and that concern which every honest
“ man ought to have for whatever serves to estab-
“ lish the truth of facts in histories of our own
“ times, has induced us to ask permission of his
“ Polish Majesty, to transact to Mr de V——, a
“ formal certificate of whatever his Majesty had
“ been pleased to impart to us. To which his
“ Majesty was not only pleased readily to consent,
“ but even gave his express orders for us to send
“ it, with his desire that Mr de V—— would, on
“ all occasions, make such use of it as he should
“ judge proper, either by communicating it, hav-
“ ing it printed, &c.”

Done at Commercy, this 11th day of July, 1759
The Count DE TRESSAN

When this instrument was sent to the author, it gave him a surprise, so much the more agreeable, as it came from a prince who was as well acquainted with the several transactions, as Charles XII. himself; and is, besides, so well known to all Europe for his regard to truth, and his humanity and benevolence.

There are a great number of testimonies, no less authentic, relating to the history of the age of Lewis XIV. a work of equal truth and importance, that breathes a spirit of patriotism, but without suffering that spirit to injure truth. to exaggerate the good, or to disguise the evil; a work composed without any views of interest, without hope, and without fear, by a person whose situation in life places him above the necessity of flattering any one.

There are very few authorities quoted in the age of Lewis XIV. as the events of the first years being known to every one, wanted only to be placed in their proper light; and as to those of later date, the author speaks of them as an eye-witness. On the contrary, in the history of the Russian empire, he always quotes his vouchers, the principal of which is Peter the Great himself.

S E C T. II.

We have not been at the pains, in this history of Peter the Great, to make any idle researches into the origin of most of the nations, of which the immense empire of Russia is composed, from Kamtschatka to the Baltic sea. It is a strange undertaking to go about, to prove by authentic pieces, that the Huns removed, in former times, from the north of China into Siberia: and that the Chinese themselves are an Egyptian Colony. I

know that some philosophers of great reputation have imagined they saw a conformity between these people, in some particulars; but their surmises have been made a bad use of, by some who have attempted to convert their conjectures into certainty.

Thus, for instance, they now pretend to prove, that the Egyptians were the ancestors of the Chinese. An ancient writer has told us, that the Egyptian king Sesostris went as far as the river Ganges: now, if he went as far as the Ganges, he might have gone to China, which is at a great distance from the Ganges; therefore he did go thither; but China, at that time, was not peopled; therefore it is clear that Sesostris peopled China. The Egyptians used lighted tapers at their festivals, the Chinese used lanthorns; it cannot, therefore, be doubted, that the Chinese are an Egyptian colony. Furthermore, the Egyptians have a great river, to have the Chinese also: Lastly, it is evident, that the first kings of China bore the same names as the ancient kings of Egypt; for in the name of the family of *Yu*, we may trace characters, which, disposed after another manner, form the word *Menes*. Therefore, it is incontestible, that the emperor *Yu* took his name from *Menes*, king of Egypt; and the emperor *Ki* is plainly king *Atoës* by changing *K* into *ä*, and *i* into *toë*.

But if a learned man of Tobolski or Pekin was to read some of our books, he might demonstrate still more clearly, that the French are descended from the Trojans. He might prove it in the following manner, and astonish his countrymen by his profound researches. The most ancient writings, he might say, and those in most esteem in that little country of the West, called France, are

romances : these were written in a pure language, derived from the ancient Romans, who were famous for never advancing a falsehood. Now upwards of twenty of these authentick books, affirm that *Frances*, the founder of the monarchy of the Franks, was son to Hector. The name of Hector has ever since been preserved by this nation ; and even in the present century, one of the greatest generals was called *Hector de Viliars*.

The neighbouring nations (he would continue) are so unanimous in acknowledging this truth, that Ariosto, one of the most learned of the Italians, owns in his *Orlando*, that Charlemagne's knights fought for Hector's helmet. Lastly, there is one proof which admits of no reply ; namely, that the ancient Franks, to perpetuate the memory of the Trojans, their ancestors, built a new city called Troye, in the province of Champaigne ; and these modern Trojans have always retained so strong an aversion to their enemies, the Greeks, that there is not at present four persons in the whole province of Campagne, who will learn their language ; nay, they would never admit any *Jesuits* amongst them, probably because they had heard it said, that some of that body used formerly to explain Homer in their public schools.

It is certain, that such arguments might produce a great effect at Coboltski or Pekin ; but then again, another learned man might overturn this fine hypothesis, by proving that the Parisians are descended from the Greeks : for he might say the first president of one of the courts of judicature of Paris, was named *Achille du Hurlai*. *Achille* is evidently derived from the Greek *Achilles*, and *Hurlai* from *Aristes*, by changing *itios* into *lii*. The Elysian fields (*champs élysées*) which still exist

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near one of the gates of the city, and mount Olympus, which is still to be seen in the neighbourhood of Meziere, are monuments, against which the most obstinate incredulity cannot hold out. Furthermore, all the Athenian customs are preserved at Paris; the citizens pass sentence there upon tragedies and comedies, with as much levity as the Athenians did; they crown the generals of their armies on the public theatres, as was done at Athens; and lastly, Marshal Saxe received publicly, from the hands of an actress, a crown, which could not be given to him in the cathedral. The Parisians have academies, derived from those of Athens, as likewise ecclesiastic canons, a liturgy, parishes, and dioceses, all Greek inventions, and the terms themselves all taken from the Greek language; nay, the very distempers of these people have their appellations from the Greek, viz. *apoplexy, phthisic, peripneumony, cachexy, difsentery, jealousy*, &c.

It must be acknowledged, that this opinion would weigh considerably against the authority of the learned personage, who had just demonstrated, that we were a Trojan colony; and both these opinions might be again contradicted by other profound antiquarians, some of whom might prove that we are Egyptians, and that the worship of Isis was established at the village of Isis, on the road from Paris to Versailles; while others again might demonstrate, that we are of Arabian extraction, as witness the words *almanac, alembic, algebra, admiral*. The Chinese and Siberian literati would be greatly puzzled to decide the question; and after all, would very likely leave us just what we are.

It seems, then, that we must still remain in uncertainty, concerning the origin of all nations. It is the same with respect to a whole people, as with

particular families. Several German barons pretend to be descended, in a direct line, from Arminius; in like manner as a pedigree was composed for Mahomet, by which his origin was derived immediately from Abraham and Hagar.

In like manner, the family of the ancient czars of Muscovy was said to come from *Bela*, king of Hungary; this *Bela* from *Attila*, *Attila* from *Turck*, the father of the Huns; and this *Turck* was the son of *Japhet*. His brother *Russ* founded the empire of Russia, and another brother, named *Cameri*, founded a state towards the river Wolga.

All these sons of Japhet were, as every one knows, the grandsons of Noah, whose three sons made what haste they could to procure themselves settlements, at the distance of a thousand leagues from each other, lest they should be of any assistance to each other; and, in all probability, by lying with their sisters, became the fathers of millions of inhabitants, in the space of a few years.

A number of grave writers have traced these descents, with much the same exactness and sagacity as they discovered the manner in which the Japoneſe peopled Peru. History has for a long time been written in this taste; a taste to which president de Thou, and Rapin-Thoyras, seem to have been absolute strangers.

S E C T. III.

If we are to be upon our guard against those historians, who go back to the tower of Babel, and to the deluge, we ought to be no less sparing

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of our credit to those who enter into a minute detail of modern history, penetrate into all the secrets of the cabinets ; and are so unfortunately minute, as to give an exact relation of every battle, when even the generals themselves would have found great difficulty in doing it.

Since the beginning of the last century, there have been near two hundred capital battles fought in Europe, most of them more bloody than those of Arbella and Pharsalia ; but as very few of these actions produced any great consequences, they are lost to posterity. Were there but one book in the world, children would know every line of it by heart, and be able to tell every syllable ; in like manner, had there been but one battle, the name of each soldier would be known, and his pedigree handed down to future ages ; but in such a long, and almost continued succession of bloody wars among christian princes, the antient interests are all changed, and give way to new ones ; the battles fought twenty years ago, are effaced by those of the present time ; as at Paris, the news of yesterday is forgotten in that of to-day ; and this, in its turn, will be lost in that of to-morrow ; and almost every event is plunged by another into perpetual oblivion. This is a reflection which cannot be dwelt upon too much ; it serves to comfort us under the misfortunes we suffer, and to shew us the nothingness of all human affairs. Nought then remains in history, worthy of fixing the attention of mankind, but those striking revolutions which have wrought a change in the manners and laws of great states ; and upon this principle the history of Peter the Great is worthy of being known.

If we have dwelt somewhat too long upon the particulars of certain battles and sieges, which resemble others of the same nature, we crave pardon of the philosophic reader and have no other excuse to offer, but that these little facts, being connected with great ones, must necessarily make a part of the whole.

We have refuted Norberg in some passages, which appeared to us the most important; but have left him quietly to enjoy his mistakes where they are of no consequence.

S E C T. IV.

This history of Peter the Great is written as concise, and at the same time as copious, as possible. There are histories of small provinces, little towns, and even of convents of monks, that take up several volumes in folio. The memoirs of a certain abbot, who retired for some years into Spain, where he scarce did any thing worth notice, employ seven volumes; whereas one has been found sufficient for the life of Alexander the Great.

Perhaps there may still be some of those overgrown children, who had rather read the fabulous stories of Osiris, Bacchus, Hercules, and Theseus, consecrated by antiquity, than the true history of a modern prince; either because the antique names of Osiris and Hercules found more agreeable in their ears than that of Peter; or that the overthrowing of giants and lions is more pleasing to a weak imagination, than the history of useful laws and noble enterprises: and yet we must acknowledge, that the defeat of the giant of

Epidaurum, and of the robber Sinnis, and the combat with *Crommion's* sow, are not equal to the exploits of the conqueror of Charles XII. the founder of Petersburg, and the legislator of a most potent empire.

It is true, the ancients taught us how to think justly; yet it would be very extraordinary to prefer *Anacharsis*, the Scythian, merely for his antiquity, to the modern Scythian, who has civilized so many people. We see no reason why the law-giver of Russia should give way either to Lycurgus or Solon. Are the laws of the latter, which recommend the love of boys to the citizens of Athens, and forbid it to the slaves, or those of the former, which ordered young women to box naked in the publick market place, to be preferred to the laws of him who civilized the people of both sexes in his dominions, and made them fit for society? who formed a military discipline by sea and land, and who opened a free passage for the arts and sciences into his native country?

This history contains the transactions of his publick life, which were useful; and not those of his private life, of which we have but few particulars, and those sufficiently known. It is not for a stranger to disclose the secrets of his cabinet, his bed, or his table. Were any person capable of furnishing such anecdotes, it must have been prince Menzikoff, or general Scheremetow, who were long the companions of his most retired hours, but they have not done it; and whatever comes to us, only from the authority of publick rumour, does not deserve belief. Men of sense had rather behold a great man, labouring for five and twenty years, for the welfare of a vast empire, than be informed, from vague and idle accounts,

of the foibles which this great prince might have in common with the meanest of his subjects.

S E C T V.

In what relates only to style, criticism, or the private reputation of an author, it is better to let the herd of petty pamphleters snarl on unnoticed, since it would be making ourselves as ridiculous as them, to lose time in answering, or even in reading their productions; but when important facts are concerned, truth must sometimes stoop to confound the falties of these despicable wretches; their infamy should no more hinder her from clearing herself, than the vileness of a criminal, among the dregs of the people, should stop the course of justice against him. It was this twofold reason, then, that obliged us to silence that impudent ignoramus, who corrupted the age of Lewis XIV. by notes, as absurd as they are malicious; in which he brutally insults a branch of the house of France, the whole house of Austria, and above an hundred other illustrious Families in Europe; to whose very antichambers he is as much a stranger, as to the facts which he hath thus insolently falsified.

The ease with which a writer may impose upon the public, and spread abroad the most flagrant calumnies, is unhappily one of the greatest inconveniences attending the noble art of printing.

Le Vassor, a priest of the oratory, and La Motte a Jesuit; the one a beggar in England, and the other in Holland; both of them wrote history for bread. The former chose Lewis XIII. of France for the object of his satire, and the latter Lewis

XIV. The character of apostates was by no means likely to secure them a greater degree of credit with the public ; nevertheless, it is pleasant to see with what confidence they both declare themselves the depositaries of truth incessantly repeating this maxim, “ That an historian should boldly declare the whole truth ” They shoud have added likewise, that he must, in the first place, be acquainted with it himself.

Their own maxim is their fullest condemnation ; but even this maxim calls for a strict examination, as it is become the excuse of all satyrists.

All truths of public utility and importance ought, doubtless, to be revealed ; but if there should be any malicious anecdote relating to a prince ; if in his domestic concerns he may, like a number of private persons, have given too much way to human frailties, known, perhaps, only to one or two confidents ; who has authorized you to reveal to the public, what these confidents ought not to have disclosed to any one ? I will grant that you might yourself have discovered this secret : but why should you tear asunder the veil with which every man has a right to cover the recesses of his own house ? What is your reason for making the scandal public ? You will say, to indulge the curiosity of mankind, to please their malice, and to sell my book, which otherwise, perhaps would not be read. You are then only a defamer, a libeller, and a broacher of calumnies, but not an historian.

If this foible of a man, in public life ; if this private vice, which you so industriously endeavoured to drag to light, has had any influence on public affairs ; if it has occasioned the loss of a battle, has hurt the revenue of a state, or made

the subject unhappy, then you ought to mention it. It is your duty to discover the minute and hidden cause which produced such great events; but otherwise you should be silent.

“ Let no truth be concealed,” is a maxim that may admit of some exceptions; but this one will admit of none, “ Acquaint posterity with nothing “ but what is worthy of posterity.”

S E C T. VI.

Besides the falsity in facts, there is also a falsity in drawing characters. The phrenzy of loading history with these portraits began first in France with the writing of romances, and the famous Clelia brought the madness into fashion. In the infancy of good taste, Sarrazin wrote his history of the conspiracy of Walstein, who was never concerned in any plot; and, in drawing the character of this general, whom he never saw, he has given a translation of almost all that Sallust says of Catiline, whom that historian knew so well. This is writing history in an ingenious manner; but the who makes too great a parade of his wit, only succeeds in shewing it; which is a matter of very little consequence.

Cardinal de Retz might with propriety give the characters of the principal personages of his time, all of whom he well knew, and who had all been either his friends or his enemies. It is true, he has not drawn them in the manner that Maimbourg has done those of the princes of past times in his romantick histories. But was the cardinal a faithful painter? Has he not suffered passion and a fondness for novelty, to misguide his pencil?

Ought he, for example, to have expressed himself in this manner of Queen Anne, mother of Lewis XIV.? "She had that sort of wit which was just necessary to keep her from appearing a fool in the eyes of those who did not know her. She had more harshness than pride, more pride than greatness of soul, more outside than reality, more regard to money than liberality, more liberality than selfishness, more selfishness than disinterestedness, more attachment than passion, more intensibility than cruelty, more superstition than real piety, more obstinacy than firmness, and more incapacity than of all the rest."

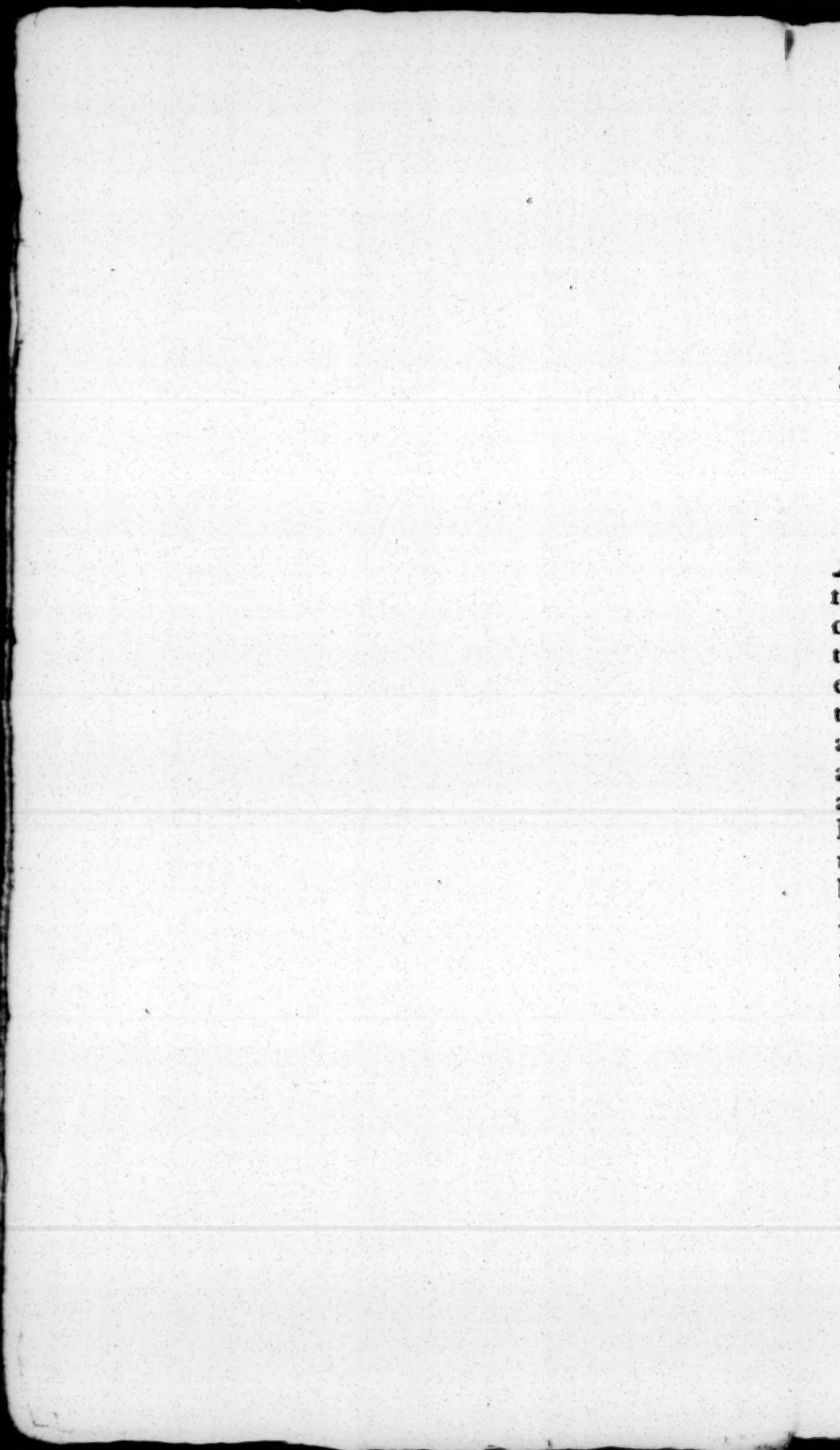
It must be owned, that this obscurity of expression, this cluster of antitheses and comparisons, and this burlesque way of drawing characters so unworthy of history, is not very likely to please those of a good understanding. The lovers of truth will question the fidelity of the portrait when they compare it with the conduct of the Queen; and virtuous minds will be as much disgusted with the ill nature and contempt, which the historian displays in speaking of a prince, who loaded him with favours, as incensed to see an archbishop stirring up a civil war, merely, as he himself acknowledges, for the pleasure of doing it.

If we are to suspect the fidelity of these portraits, drawn by those who had such opportunities of painting to the life, how can we credit the bare assertion of an historian, who affects to dive into the heart of a prince, that, perhaps, lived six hundred leagues distant from him? In this case, he ought to describe him by his actions, and leave it to those who have long attended his person, to tell the rest.

Harangues or set speeches are another species of oratorial falsehood, in which historians formerly indulged themselves. They made their heroes say, what was possible for them to have said. A liberty of this kind might, indeed, be taken with a personage of remote times, but at present these fictions are no longer tolerated; nay, we expect much more; for was a writer, at present, to put into the mouth of a prince a speech which he never made, we should consider such author no longer as an historian, but a rhetorician.

A third species of falsehood, and the most gross of all though it has been long the most seducing, is that of the marvellous. This prevails in all the ancient histories without excepting one.

Some predictions are still to be met with in the history of Charles XII. by Norberg; but we find none in any of the historians of the present age. Omens, prodigies, and apparitions, are now sent back to the regions of fable. History stood in need of being enlightened by philosophy.



THE
HISTORY
OF THE
RUSSIAN Empire under PETER the GREAT,
INTRODUCTION.

AT the beginning of the present century, the vulgar knew no other hero in the north than Charles XII. of Sweden. His personal valour, which has rather that of a private soldier than a great king, the luster of his victories, and even of his misfortunes made an impression on those who are easily struck with great events, but are not so clear-sighted in regard to more slow and useful labours. It was even much doubted at that time by foreign nations, whether Czar Peter I would be able to go thro' with his great undertakings; yet they have not only continued, but even improved, especially under the empress Elizabeth, his daughter. This empire is at present reckoned in the number of the most flourishing states; and Peter is ranked amongst the greatest law-givers though his undertakings did not stand in need of success in the eyes of wise men, yet his success has perpetuated his glory. We now think, that Charles XII. deserved to be the first general under Peter the Great: the one has left only ruins behind him; the other has been a founder of his empire in every sense. I ventured to pass much the same judgment about thirty years ago, when

I was writing the history of Charles XII. The memoirs I have been since furnished with from the court of Russia, afford me the means of making this empire known, whose people are of such antiquity, while their laws, manners, and arts, are all of a new creation.

C H A P. I.

Description of RUSSIA.

THE empire of Russia is the largest in the whole globe, extending from west to east upwards of two thousand common leagues and about eight hundred in its greatest breath from north to south. It borders upon Poland and the Frozen Sea, and joins to Sweden and China. Its length from the island of Dago, in the westernmost part of Livonia, to its most eastern limits takes in near 170 degrees, so that when it is noon in the western parts of the empire, it is nearly mid-night in the eastern. Its breadth from north to south is 3600 wersts, which make 850 of our common French leagues.

The limits of this country were so little known in the last century, that, in 1689, when it was reported, that the Chinese and Russians were at war, and that in order to terminate their differences, the emperor *Cam-hi* on the one hand, and the Czars John and Peter on the other, had sent their ministers to meet an embassy within three hundred leagues of Pekin, on the frontiers of the two empires; this account was at first treated as a fiction.

The country now comprehended under the name of Russia, or the Russi's, is of a greater extent than all the rest of Europe, or than ever the Roman empire was, or that of Darius subdued by Alexander: for it contains upwards of 1,100,000 square leagues. Neither the Roman empire, nor that of Alexander, contained more than 550,000 each; and there is not a kingdom in Europe, the twelfth part so extensive as the Roman Empire; but to make Russia as populous, as plentiful, and as well stored with towns as our southern countries, would require whole ages, and a race of monarchs such as Peter the Great.

The English ambassador who resided at Petersburg in 1733, and who had been at Madrid, says, in his manuscript relation, that in Spain, which is the least populous state in Europe, there may be reckoned forty persons to every square mile, and in Russia not above five. We shall see in the second chapter, whether this minister was mistaken. Marshal Vauban, the greatest of engineers, and the best of citizens, computes, that in France, every square mile contains 200 inhabitants. These calculations are never very exact, but they serve to shew the amazing disproportion in the population of two different countries.

I shall observe here, that from Petersburg to Pekin there is hardly one mountain to be met with in the route which the caravans might take through independant Tartary, and that from Petersburg to the north of France, by the road of Dantzick, Hamburg, and Amsterdam, there is not even a hill of any eminence to be seen. This observation leaves room to doubt of the truth of that theory, which makes the mountains to have been formed by the rolling of the waves of the sea, and suppos-

es all that is at present dry land, to have been for a long time covered with water; but how comes it to pass that the waves, which, according to the supposition, formed the Alps, the Pyrenees, and Mount Taurus, did not likewise form some eminence or hill from Normandy to China, which is a winding space of above 3000 leagues? Geography thus considered, may furnish lights to natural philosophy, or at least give room for rational doubts.

Formerly we called Russia by the name of Muscovy, from the city of Moscow, the capital of that empire, and the residence of the grand dukes: but at present the ancient name of Russia prevails.

It is not my business in this place to enquire, why the countries from Smolensko, to the other side of Moscow, were called White Russia, or why Hubner gives it the name of Black, nor for what reason the government of Kiow should be named Red Russia.

It is very likely that *Mades* the Scythian, who made an irruption into Asia, near seven hundred years before our vulgar æra, might have carried his arms into these regions, as Genzis Khan and Tamerlane did afterwards, and as probably others had done long before *Mades*. Every part of antiquity is not deserving of our enquiries; that of the Chinese, the Indians, the Persians, and the Egyptians, is ascertained from illustrious and interesting monuments; but these monuments suppose others of a far more ancient date, since it required many ages to teach them the art of transmitting their thoughts by permanent signs, and no less time was required to form a regular language; and yet we have no such monuments, even in this polite part of Europe. The art of writing was a

long time unknown to all the north: the patriarch Constantine, who wrote the history of Kiow in the Russian language, acknowledges, that the use of writing was not known in these countries in the fifth century.

Let others examine whether the Huns, the Slavi, and the Tartars, formerly led their wandering and famished tribes towards the source of the Boristhenes; my design is to shew what Czar Peter created, and not to engage in an useless attempt, to clear up the chaos of antiquity. We should always keep in mind, that no family upon earth knows its first founder, and consequently, that no nation knows its first origin.

I use the name of Russians to designate the inhabitants of this great empire. That of Roxolani, which was formerly given them, would indeed be more sonorous, but we should conform to the custom of the language in which we write. News-papers and other memoirs have for some time used the word Russians; but as this name comes too near to that of Prussians, I shall abide by that of Russ, which almost all our writers have given them. Besides it appeared to me, that the most extensive people on the earth ought to be known by some appellation that may distinguish them absolutely from all other nations.

And here it will be necessary for the reader to have recourse to a map, in order to form a clear idea of this empire, which is at present divided into sixteen large governments, that will one day be subdivided, when the northern and eastern countries come to be more inhabited.

These sixteen governments, which contain several immense provinces, are the following.

L I V O N I A.

The nearest province to our part of the world is that of Livonia, one of the most fruitful in the whole north. In the 12th century the inhabitants were pagans; at this time certain merchants of Bremen and Lubec traded to this country; and a body of religious crusaders, called *Port-glaives*, (or sword bearers) who were afterwards incorporated in the Teutonic order, made themselves masters of this province in the thirteenth century, at the time when the fury of the crusades armed the Christians against every one who was not of their religion. Albert, margrave of Brandenburg, grand master of these religious conquerors, made himself sovereign of Livonia and of Brandenburg-Prussia, about the year 1514. From that time, the Russians and Poles began to dispute for the possession of this province. Soon afterwards it was invaded by the Swedes, and for a long while continued to be ravaged by these several powers. Gustavus Adolphus having conquered it, it was then ceded to the Swedes in 1660, by the famous treaty of Oliva; and, at length, Czar Peter wrested it from these latter, as will be seen in the course of this history.

Courland, which joins to Livonia, is still in vassalage to Poland, though it depends greatly upon Russia. These are the western limits of this empire in Christendom.

Of the governments of REVEL, PETERSBURG,
and WYBURG.

More northward is the government of Revel and Esthonia. Revel was built by the Danes in the 13th century. The Swedes were in possession of this province, from the time that country put itself under the protection of that crown in 1561. This is another of the conquests of Peter the Great.

On the borders of Esthonia lies the gulph of Finland. To the eastward of this sea, and at the junction of the Neva with the lake Ladoga, is situated Petersburg, the most modern and best built city in the whole empire, founded by Czar Peter, in spite of all the united obstacles which opposed its foundation.

This city is situated on the bay of Kronstat, in the midst of nine rivers, by which its different quarters are divided. In the centre of this city is almost an impregnable fortress, built on an island, formed by the main-stream of the river Neva: seven canals are cut from the rivers, and wash the walls of one of the royal palaces of the admiralty, of the dock yard for the gallies, and of several buildings of manufactories. Thirty-five large churches contribute to adorn the city; among which five are allotted for foreigners of the Roman Catholic, Calvinist, and Lutheran religions: these are so many temples raised to toleration, and examples to other nations. There are five palaces; the old one, called summer-palace, situated on the river Neva, has a very large and beautiful stone balustrade, which runs all along the river side.

The new summer palace near the triumphal gate, is one of the finest pieces of architecture in Europe. The admiralty buildings, the school for cadets, the imperial college, the academy of sciences, the exchange, and the merchants ware-houses, are all magnificent structures, and monuments of taste and public utility. The town-house, the public dispensary, where all the vessels are of porcelain, the court magazines, the foundery, the arsenal, the bridges the markets, the squares, the barracks for the horse and foot guards, contribute at once to the embellishment and safety of the city which is said to contain at present 400,000 souls. In the environs of the city are several villas or country-seats, which surprize all travellers by their magnificence. There is one in particular which has water-works superior to those of Versailles. There was nothing of all this in 1702, the whole being then an impassable morass. Petersburg is considered as the capital of Ingria, a small province subdued by Peter I. Wyburg, another of his conquests, and that part of Finland which was lost, and ceded by the Swedes in 1742, makes another government.

A R C H A N G E L.

Higher up proceeding towards the north, is the province of Archangel, a country entirely new to the southern nations of Europe. It took its name from St Michael the Archangel, under whose patronage it was put long after the Russians had embraced christianity, which did not happen till the beginning of the 11th century; and they were not known to the other nations of Europe till the middle of the 16th. The English, in 1533, en-

deavouring to find out a north-east passage to the East Indies. Chancellor, captain of one of the ships fitted out for that expedition, discovered the port of Archangel in the White Sea ; at that time it was a desert place, having only one convent, and a little church, dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel.

The English sailing up the river Dwina, arrived at the midland part of the country, and at length at Moscow. Here they easily made themselves masters of the trade of Russia, which was removed from the city of Novogorod, where it was carried on by land to this sea-port, which is inaccessible indeed during seven months in the year ; but, nevertheless, this trade proved more beneficial to the empire, than the fairs of Novogorod, that had fallen to decay in consequence of the wars with Sweden. The English obtained the privilege of trading thither without paying any duties ; a manner of trading which is apparently the most beneficial to all nations. The Dutch soon came in for a share of the trade of Archangel, then unknown to other nations.

Long before this time, the Genoese and Venetians had established a trade with the Russians by the mouth of the Tanais or Don, where they had built a town called Tana. This branch of the Italian commerce was destroyed by the ravages of Tamerlane, in that part of the world ; but that of Archangel continued, with great advantages both to the English and Dutch, till the time that Peter the Great opened a passage into his dominions by the Baltic sea.

RUSSIAN LAPLAND.

Of the government of ARCHANGEL.

To the west of Archangel, and within its government, lies Russian Lapland, the third part of this country, the other two belonging to Sweden and Denmark. This is a very large tract, occupying about eight degrees of longitude, and extending in latitude from one polar circle to the North Cape. The natives of this country were confusedly known to the ancients, under the name of *Troglodytes* and northern pygmies; appellations suitable enough to men, who, for the most part, are not above four feet and an half high, and dwell in caverns; they are just the same people they were at that time. They are of a tawny complexion, though the other people of the north are white: and for the most part very low in stature, though their neighbours, and the people of Iceland, under the polar circle, are tall: they seem made for their mountainous country, being nimble, squat, and robust; their skins are hard, the better to resist the cold, their thighs and legs are slender, their feet small, to enable them to run more nimbly amongst the rocks, with which their province is covered; they are passionately fond of their own country, which none but themselves can be pleased with, and are able to live no where else. Some have affirmed, upon the credit of Olaus, that these people were originally natives of Finland, that they removed into Lapland, where they diminished in stature; but why might they not as well made choice of lands less northerly,

where the conveniences of life were to be had in greater plenty? How comes it that they differ so totally from their pretended ancestors in features, figure, and complexion? Methinks we might, with as great reason, suppose that the graft which grows in Lapland, is produced from that of Denmark, and that the fishes peculiar to their lakes, came from those of Sweden. It is most likely that the Laplanders are like their animals, the produce of their own country, and that nature has made the one for the other.

Those who inhabit the frontiers of Finland, have adapted some of the expressions of their neighbours, as happens to every people; but when two nations give to things of common use, to objects which are continually before their eyes, names absolutely different, it affords a strong presumption, that one of them is not a colony from the other. The Finlanders call a bear a Karu, the Laplanders Muriet: the sun in the Finnith language is called Auringa, in the Lapland tongue Beve. Here is not the least analogy. The inhabitants of Finland, and Swedish Lapland, formerly worshiped an idol whom they called Iumalac; and since the reign of Gustavus Adolphus, to whom they are indebted for the appellation of Lutherans, they call Jesus Christ the son of Iumalac. The Muscovite or Russian Laplanders, are at present thought to be of the Greek church; but those who wander about the mountains of the north Cape, are satisfied with adoring one God under certain rude forms, as has been the ancient custom of all the nations called Nomades, or wandering nations.

This race of people, who are inconsiderable in numbers, have but very few ideas, and are happy

in not having more, which would only occasion them to have new wants which they could not satisfy: at present they live contented, and free from diseases, notwithstanding the excessive coldness of their climate; they drink nothing but water, and attain to a great age. The custom imputed to them of entreating strangers to lie with their wives and daughters, which they esteem as an honour done to them, probably arose from a notion of the superiority of strangers, and a desire of amending, by their means, the defects of their own race. This was a custom established amongst the virtuous Lacedaemonians. A husband would entreat as a favour of a comely young man, to give him handsome children, whom he might adopt. Jealousy and the laws, prevent the rest of mankind from giving their wives up to the embraces of another; but the Laplanders have few or no laws, and are, in all probability, strangers to jealousy.

M O S C O W.

Ascending the river Dwina from North to South we travel up the country till we come to Moscow, the capital of the empire. This city was long the centre of the Russian dominions, before they were extended on the side of China and Persia.

Moscow lying in 55 degrees and a half, north latitude in a warmer climate, and more fruitful soil than that of Petersburg, is situated in the midst of a large and delightful plain on the river Moskwa, and two lesser rivers, which with the former lose themselves in the Occa, and afterwards help to swell the stream of the Wolga. This city, in

the 12th century, was only a collection of huts, inhabited by a set of miserable wretches, oppressed by the descendants of Gengis Khan.

The Kremlin, or ancient palace of the great dukes, was not built till the 14th century; of such modern date are cities in this part of the world. This palace was built by Italian architects, as were several churches in the Gothic taste, which then prevailed throughout all Europe. There are two built by the famous Aristotle of Bologna, who flourished in the 15th century; but the private houses were no better than wooden huts.

The first writer who brought us acquainted with Moscow, was Olearius; who, in 1633, went thither as the companion of an embassy from the duke of Holstein. A native of Holstein must naturally be struck with wonder at the immense extent of the city of Moscow, with its five quarters, especially the magnificent one belonging to the czars, and with the Asiatic splendor which then reigned at that court. There was nothing equal to it in Germany at that time, nor any city by far so extensive or well peopled.

On the contrary, the Earl of Carlisle, who was Ambassador from Charles II. to the czar Alexis, in 1663, complains in his relation, that he could not meet with any one convenience of life in Moscow; no inns on the road, nor refreshments of any kind. One judged as a German, the other as an Englishman, and both by comparison. The Englishman was shocked to see most of the Boyars or Muscovite noblemen sleep upon boards or benches, with only the skins of animals under them; but this was the ancient practice of all nations. The houses, which were almost all built of wood, had scarcely any furniture; few or none

of their tables were covered with cloth; there was no pavement in the streets; nothing agreeable; nothing convenient; very few artificers, and those few extremely awkward, and employed only in works of absolute necessity. These people might have passed for Spartans, had they been sober.

But on public days, the court displays all the splendour of a Persian monarch. The Earl says he could see nothing but gold and precious stones, on the robes of the czar and his courtiers. These dresses were not manufactured in the country; and yet it is evident, that the people might be rendered industrious long before that time. In the reign of the czar Boris Godonow, the largest bell was cast at Moscow, in Europe; and in the Patriarchal church, there were several ornaments in silver, worked in a very curious manner. These pieces of workmanship, which were made under the direction of Germans and Italians, were only transient efforts. It is daily industry, and the continual exercise of a great number of arts, that makes a nation flourishing. Poland, and the neighbouring nations, were at that time very little superior to the Russians. The handicraft trades were not in greater perfection in the north of Germany, nor were the polite arts much better known than in the middle of the 17th century.

Though the city of Moscow, at that time, had neither the magnificence nor arts of our great cities in Europe; yet its circumference of twenty miles; the part called the Chinese town, where all the rarities of China are exhibited; the spacious quarter of the Kremlin, where stood the palace of the czars; the gilded domes, the lofty and conspicuous turrets, and lastly the prodigious number of its inhabitants amounting to near

500,000: all this together rendered Moscow one of the most considerable cities in the world.

Theodore, or Fœdor, eldest brother to Peter the Great, began to improve Moscow. He ordered several large houses to be built of stone, though without any regular architecture. He encouraged the principal persons of his court to build, advancing them sums of money, and furnishing them with materials. He was the first who collected studs of fine horses, and made several fine useful embellishments. Peter, who was attentive to every thing, did not neglect Moscow at the time he was building Petersburg: for he caused it to be paved, adorned it with noble edifices, and enriched it with manufactures; and within these few years, Mr. de Showalow, high Chamberlain to the empress Elizabeth, daughter to Peter the Great, has founded an university in this city. This is the same person who furnished me with the memorials, from which I have compiled the present history, and who was himself much more capable to have done it, even in the French language, had not his great modesty determined him to resign the task to me, as will evidently appear from his own letters on this subject, which I have deposited in the public library of Geneva.

S M O L E N S K O.

Westward of the Duchy of Moscow, is that of Smolensko, a part of the ancient Sarmatia Europea. The dutchies of Moscow and Smolensko composed what is properly called White Russia. Smolensko, which at first belonged to the great dukes of Russia, was conquered by the great duke

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of Lithuania, in the beginning of the 15th century, and was retaken one hundred years afterward by its old masters. Sigismund III. king of Poland, got possession of it in 1611. The czar Alexi, father of Peter I. recovered it again in 1655, since which time it has always constituted part of the Russian empire. The panegyric of Peter the Great, pronounced in the academy of sciences at Paris, takes notice, that before his time the Russians had made no conquests either to the West or south; but this is evidently a mistake.

Of the government of Novogorod and Kiow or the Ukraine.

Between Petersburg and Smolensko, lies the province of Novogorod; and is said to be the country in which the ancient *Savvi*, or Slavonians, made their first settlements. But from whence came these *Savvi*, whose language has spread over all the north-east part of Europe? *Sla* signifies a chief, and *Slave* one belonging to a chief. All that we know concerning these ancient *Savvi*, is, that they were a race of conquerors; that they built the city of Novogorod the Great, at the head of a navigable river; that this city was for a long time in possession of a flourishing trade, and was a potent ally of the Hanse towns. The Czar, John Basilowitz, made a conquest of it in 1467, and carried away all its riches, which contributed to the magnificence of the court of Moscow, till then almost unknown.

To the south of the province of Smolensko, we meet with the province of Kiow, otherwise called the lesser Russia, Red Russia, or the Ukraine, thro'

which runs the Dniper, called by the Greeks the Boristhenes. The difference of these two names, the one so harsh to pronounce, and the other so melodious, serves to shew us, together with an hundred other like instances, the rudeness of all the ancient people of the north,, in comparison, with the graces of the Greek language. Kiow, the capital city, formerly Kisow, was built by the emperors of Constantinople, who made it a colony: here are still to be seen several Greek inscriptions, upwards of 1200 years old. This is the only city of any antiquity in these countries, where men lived long together without building walls. Here it was that the great dukes of Russia held their residence in the 11th century, before the Tartars brought it under their subjection.

The inhabitants of the Ukraine, called Cossacks are a mixture of the ancient Roxolani, Sarmanians, and Tartars, blended together. Rome and Constantinople, though so long the mistresses of other nations, are not to compare in fertility of country with the Ukraine. Nature has there exerted her utmost efforts for the service of mankind; but they have not seconded those efforts by industry, living only upon the spontaneous productions of an uncultivated but fruitful soil, and the exercise of rapine. Though fond to a degree of enthusiasm, of that most valuable of all blessings, liberty; yet they were always in subjection, either to the Poles, or to the Turks, till the year 1654, when they threw themselves into the arms of Russia but with some limitations. At length they were entirely subdued by Peter the Great.

Other nations are divided into cities and towns; this into ten regiments. At the head of which is a chief, who used to be elected by the majority of

votes, and is called by the name of Hetman or Itman. This captain of the nation was not invested with supreme power. At present the Itman is a person nominated by the czar, from among the lords of the court; and is, in fact, no more than the governor of the province, like governors of the *Pays d'Etats* in France, that have retained some privileges.

At first the inhabitants of this country, were all either pagans or Mahometants; but when they entered into the service of Poland, they were baptised Christians of the Roman communion; and now that they are in the service of Russia, they belong to the Greek church.

Amongst these are comprehended the Zapovian Cossacks, who are much the same as our Buccaneers or Freebooters, living upon rapine. They are distinguished from all other people, by never admitting women to live among them; as the Amazons are said never to have admitted any man. The women, whom they make use for propagation, live upon other islands upon the river; they have no marriages amongst them, nor any domestic economy; they enrol the male children in their militia, and leave the girls to the care of their mothers. A brother has frequently children by his sister, and a father by his daughter. They know no other laws than customs introduced by necessity; however, they make use of some prayers from the Greek ritual. For St. Elizabeth has been lately built on the Boristhene, to keep them in awe. They serve as irregulars in the Russian armies, and hapless is the fate of those who fall into their hands.

*Of the government of BELGOROD, WORONITZ,
and NISCHGOROD.*

To the north-east of the province of Kiow, between the Boristhenes and Tanais, or the Don, is the government of Belgorod, which is as large as that of Kiow. This is one of the most fruitful provinces of Russia, and furnishes Poland with a prodigious number of that large cattle, known by the name of the Ukrainian oxen. These two provinces are secured from the incursions of the petty Tartar tribes, by lines extending from the Boristhenes to the Tanais, and well furnished with forts and redoubts.

Farther northward we cross the Tanais, and come into the government of Worownitz or Veronite, which extends as far as the banks of the Palus Maeotis. In the neighbourhood of the capital of this province, which is called by the Russians, Woronestch, at the mouth of the river of the same name, which falls into the Don, Peter the Great built his first fleet; an undertaking which was at that time entirely new to the inhabitants of these vast dominions. From thence we come to the government of Nischgorod, abounding with grain, and is watered by the river Wolga.

A S T R A C A N.

From the latter province we proceed southward to the kingdom of Astracan. This country reaches from 43 1-half degrees north latitude, in a most

delightful climate to near 50, including as many degrees of longitude as of latitude. It is bounded on one side by the Caspian sea, and on the other by the mountains of Circassia, projecting beyond the Caspian, along mount Caucatus. It is watered by the great river Wolga, the Jaick, and several other lesser streams, between which, according to Mr. Perry, the English engineer, canals might be cut that would serve as reservoirs to receive the overflowing of the waters; and by that means answer the same purposes as the canals of the Nile, and make the soil more fruitful: but to the right and left of the Wolga and Jaick, this fine country was inhabited, or rather infected, by Tartars, who never apply themselves to agriculture, but have always lived as strangers and sojourners upon the face of the earth.

Perry the engineer, who was employed by Peter the Great in these parts, found a vast tract of land covered with pasture, leguminous plants, cherry and almond trees, and large flocks of wild-sheep, who feed in their solitary places, and whose flesh was excellent. The inhabitants of these countries must be conquered and civilized, in order to second the efforts of nature, who has been forced in the climate of Petersburg.

The kingdom of Astracan is a part of the ancient Capthake conquered by Gengis-Khan, and afterwards by Tamerlane, whose dominions extended as far as Moscow. The czar John Basiliades, grandson of John Basilowitz, and the greatest conqueror of all the Russian princes delivered his country from the Tartarian yoke, in the 16th century, and added the kingdom of Astracan to his other conquests in 1554.

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Astracan is the boundary of Asia and Europe, and is so situated as to be able to carry on a trade with both, as merchandises may be conveyed from the Caspian sea, up to this towns by means of the Wolga. This was one of the grand schemes of Peter the Great, and has been partly carried into execution. An entire suburb of Astracan is inhabited by Indians.

O R E M B O U R G.

To the south-east of the kingdom of Astracan is a small country newly planted, called Orembourg. The town of this name was built in the year 1734, on the banks of the river Jaick. This province is thick covered with hills, that are part of mount Caucasus. The passes in these mountains, and of the rivers that run down from them, are defended by forts raised at equal distances. In this region, formerly uninhabited, the Persians come at present, to hide, from the rapacity of robbers, such of their effects as have escaped the fury of the civil wars. The city of Orembourg is become the asylum of the Persians and their riches and is grown considerable by their calamities. The natives of Great Bukari come hither to trade, so that it is become the mart of Asia.

Of the Government of CASAN, and of GREAT PERMIA.

Beyond the Wolga and Jaick towards the north lies the kingdom of Casan, which, like that of Astracan, fell by partition to one of the sons of

Gengis-Khan, and afterwards to a son of Tamerlane, and was at length conquered by John Batilides. It is still inhabited by a number of Mahometan Tartars. This vast country stretches as far as Siberia: it is allowed to have been formerly very flourishing and rich, and still retains some part of its pristine opulence. A province of this kingdom, called Great Permia, and since Solikam was the staple of the merchandises of Persia, and the furs of Tartary. There has been found in Permia a great quantity of the coin of the first Caliphs and some Tartarian idols, made of gold; but these monuments of ancient opulence were found in the midst of barren deserts and extreme poverty, where there were not the least traces of commerce: revolutions of this nature may easily happen to a barren country, seeing they are so soon brought about in the most fruitful provinces.

The famous Swedish prisoner Strachlemburg, who made such advantageous use of his misfortunes, and who examined those extensive countries with so much attention, was the first who gave an air of probability to a fact which before had been always thought incredible; namely, concerning the ancient commerce of these provinces. Pliny and Pomponius Mella relate, that, in the reign of Augustus, a king of Suevi made a present to Metellus Celer of some Indians who had been cast by a storm upon the coasts bordering upon the Elbe. But how could inhabitants of India navigate the Germanic seas? This adventure was deemed fabulous by the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope. But formerly it was no more extraordinary to see an Indian trading to the north-west of his country, than to see a Roman go from India by the way of

Arabia. The Indians went to Persia, and thence embarked on the Hyrcanian sea, and ascending the Rha, now the Wolga, got to the Great Permia through the River Kama; from whence they might take shipping again on the Black Sea, or the Baltick. They have in all times, been enterprising men. The Tyrians undertook most surprising voyages.

If after surveying these vast provinces, we direct our view towards the east, we shall find the limits of Europe, and Asia again confounded. A new name is wanting for this considerable part of the globe. The ancients divided their known world into Europe, Asia, and Africa; but they had not seen the tenth part of it; hence it happens, that when we pass the Palus Maeotis, we are at a loss to know where Europe ends, or Asia begins; all that tract of country lying beyond mount Taurus was distinguished by the general appellation of Scythia, and afterwards by that of Tartary. It might not be improper, perhaps, to give the name of *Terræ Arcticæ*, or Northern Lands, to the country extending from the Baltic sea to the confines of China; as that of *Terra Australis*, or Southern Lands, are to that equally extensive part of the world situated under the Antarctic Pole, and which serves to counterpoise the globe.

Of the government of SIBERIA, of the SAMOJEDES, the OSTIAKS, KAMTSCHA FKA, &c.

Siberia, with the territories beyond it, extends from the frontiers of the provinces of Archangel, Resan, and Astracan, eastward as far as the sea of Japan. It joins the southern parts of Russia by

mount Caucasus ; from thence to the country of Kamtchatka, is about 1200 computed French leagues ; and from southern Tartary, which serves as its boundary to the Frozen sea, about 400, which is the least breadth of the Russian empire. This country produces the richest furs ; and this occasioned the discovery of it the year 1563.

In the 16th century, in the reign of the czar John Basilides, and not in that of Fœdor Johannowitz, a private person in the neighbourhood of Archangel, named Anika, one tolerably rich for his condition of life and country, took notice, that men of an extraordinary figure, and dressed in a manner unknown to that country, and who spoke a language understood by no one but themselves, came every year down a river which falls into the Dwina *, and brought martens and black foxes, which they trucked for nails and pieces of glass ; just as the first savages of America used to exchange their gold with the Spaniards : he caused them to be followed by his sons and Servants as far as their own country. These were the Samojetes, a people who seem to resemble the Laplanders, but are of a different race. They are, like that people unacquainted with the use of bread ; and like them they yoke rein deer to draw their sledges. They live in caverns and huts, amidst the snow † ; but in other respects nature has made a visible difference between this species of men and the Laplander. Their upper jaw projects forward, so as to be on a level with their nose, and their ears are placed higher. Both the men and women have no hair in any other part of their bodies but their heads ; and their niple is of a deep black, like e-

* Memoirs sent from Petersburg. † Idem.

bony. The Lapland men and women are distinguished by no such marks. By memoirs sent from these countries so little known, I have been informed, that the author of the curious natural history of the king's garden, is mistaken, where, in speaking of many curiosities in human nature, he confounds the Lapland race with that of the Samojedes. There are many more different species of men than is commonly thought. The Samojedes, and the Hottentots, seem to be the two extremes of our continent; and if we observe the black nipples of the Samojedian women, and the apron with which nature has furnished the Hottentot females, and which hangs half way down their thighs, we may have some idea of the great variety of our animal species, a variety unknown to those inhabiting great cities, who are generally strangers to almost every thing that is not immediately within their view.

The Samojedes are as singular in their moral as in their physical distinctions; they pay no worship to the supreme being; they border upon Manicheism, or rather upon the religion of the ancient Magi in this one point, that they acknowledge a good and an evil principle. The horrible climate they inhabit may in some measure excuse this belief, which is of such antient date, and so natural to those who are ignorant and unhappy.

Theft or murder is never heard of amongst them; being in a manner devoid of passions, they are strangers to injustice; they have no terms in their language to denote vice and virtue; their extreme simplicity has not yet permitted them to form abstract ideas; they are wholly guided by sensation; and this is perhaps an incontestible proof that men naturally love justice, when not blended by inordinate passions.

Some of these savages were prevailed on to suffer themselves to be carried to Moscow, where many things they saw struck them with admiration. They gazed upon the Emperor as their God, and voluntarily engaged for themselves and countrymen a present of two martens or fables every year for each inhabitant. Colonies were soon settled beyond the Oby and the Irtis, and some forts built. In the year 1595 a Cossack officer was sent into this country, who conquered it for the Czar with only a few soldiers and some artillery, as Cortez did Mexico; but he only made a conquest of barren deserts.

In sailing up the Oby to the junction of the river Irtis with the Tobol, they found a petty settlement, which they converted into the town of Tobol, now the capital of Siberia, and a considerable place. Who could imagine that this country was for a long time the residence of those very Huns, who under Attila carried their depredations as far as the gates of Rome, and that these Huns came from the north of China? The Usbeck Tartars succeeded the Huns and the Russians the Usbecks. The possession of these savage countries has been disputed with as much murderous fury as that of the most fruitful provinces. Siberia was for nearly twice as peopled than it is at present, especially about the south in parts; it we may judge from the rivers and stupendous monuments.

All this part of the world, from the 6th deg. of lat. or thereabouts, as far as those mountains of perpetual ice which border the north seas, is totally different from the regions of the temperate zone; the earth produces neither the fine plants nor the fine animals that are here the tame tortoises in their lakes and rivers.

Below the country of the Samojedes lies that of the Ostiaks, along the river Oby. These people have no resemblance in any respect with the Samojedes, save that like them and all the first race of men they are hunters, fishermen, and shepherds; some of them have no religion, not being formed into any society, and the others who live together in herds or clans, have a kind of worship, and pray to the principal object of their wants they adore the skin of a sheep, because this creature is of all others the most serviceable to them; just as the Egyptian husbandmen made choice of an ox, as an emblem of the Diety who created that creature for the use of man.

The Ostiaks have likewise other idols, whose origin and worship are as little deserving our notice as their worshippers. There were some converts to Christianity made amongst them in the year 1712; but these, like the lowest of our peasants, are Christians without knowing what they profess. Several writers pretend that these people were natives of Great Perm, but as Great Perm is in a manner a desert how comes it then its inhabitants should settle themselves at such a distance, and so inconveniently? this is a difficulty not worth clearing up. Every nation, which has not cultivated the polite arts, deserves to remain in obscurity.

In the country of the Ostiaks in particular, and amongst their neighbours the Burates and Jakutians, they, often discover a kind of ivory under ground, the nature of which is as yet unknown. Some take it to be a sort of fossil, and others the tooth of a species of elephants, the breed of which have been destroyed: but where is the country that does not afford some natural produc-

tions, which at once astonish and confound philosophy?

Several mountains in this country abound with the amianthes or asbestos, a kind of incornousible flax, of which a sort of cloth and paper is sometimes made.

To the south of the Oltaks are the Burites, another people, who have not yet been made Christians. Eastward there are several hordes, whom the Russians have not as yet entirely subdued.

None of these people have the least knowledge of the calendar. They reckon their time by snows and not by the apparent motion of the sun: as it snows regularly, and for a long time every winter, they say, 'I am so many snows old,' just as we say, I am so many years.

And here I must mention an extraordinary fact related by the Swedish officer Strahlemburg, who was taken prisoner in the battle of Pultowa, and lived fifteen years in Siberia, and made the entire tour of that country. He says that there are still some remains of an ancient people, whose skin is potted or variegated with different colours, and that he himself had seen some of them; and the fact has been confirmed to me by Russians born at Tobolsky. The variety of the human species seems to be greatly diminished, and as we find very few of these extraordinary people, and they have probably been exterminated by some other race: for instance, there are very few Aibinos, or White Moors; one of them was presented to the academy of sciences at Paris, which I saw. It is the same with respect to several other species of animals which are rare.

As to the Bicandians, of whom mention is made so frequently in the learned history of the

king's garden, my memoirs say, that this race of people is entirely unknown to the Russians.

All the southern part of these countries is peopled by numerous hordes of Tartars. The antient Turks came from this part of Tartary to conquer these extensive countries, of which they are at present in possession. The Calmucks and Monguls are the very Scythians who, under Madies, made themselves masters of Upper Asia, and conquered Cyaxares king of the Medes. They are the men, whom Gengis Khan and his sons led afterwards as far as Germany, and was termed the Mogul empire under Tamerlane. These people afford a lively instance of the vicissitudes which have happened to all nations; some of their hordes, so far from being formidable now, are become vassals to Russia.

Among these is a nation of Calmucks, dwelling between Siberia and the Caspian sea, where, in the year 1720, there was discovered a subterraneous houte of stone, with urns, lamps, earrings, an equestrian statue of an oriental prince, with a diadem on his head, two women seated on thrones, and a roll of manuscripts, which were sent by Peter the Great to the academy of inscriptions at Paris and proved to be written in the Thibet language: all these are striking proofs, that the liberal arts formerly resided in this now barbarous country, and are lasting evidences of the truth of what Peter the Great was wont several times to say, viz that the arts had made the tour of the globe.

The last province is Kamtshatka, the most eastern part of the continent. The inhabitants were absolutely void of all religion when they were first discovered. The north part of this country like-

wise affords fine furs, with which the inhabitants clothed themselves in winter, though they went naked all the summer season. The first discoverers were surprised to find in the southern parts men with long beards, while in the northern parts, from the county of the Samjedes, as far as the mouth of the river Amur, they have no more beards than the Americans. Thus in the empire of Russia, there is a greater number of different species, more singularities, and a greater diversity of manners and customs, than in any country in the known world.

The first discovery of this country was made by a Cossack officer, who went by land from Siberia to Kamtchatka in 1701, by order of Peter the Great, who, notwithstanding his misfortune at Narva, still continued to extend his care from one extremity of the continent to the other. Afterwards, in 1725, sometime before death surprised him, in the midst of his great exploits, he sent captain Bering a Decree, with express orders to find out, if possible, a passage by the sea of Kamtchatka, to the coast of America. Bering did not succeed in his first attempt; but the empress Anne sent him out again in 1738. Mr. Spengenberg, captain of a ship, his associate in this voyage, set out the first from Kamtchatka, but could not put to sea till the year 1739, so much time was taken up in getting to the port where they were to embark, in building and fitting out the ships, and providing the necessaries. Spengenberg sailed as far as the north part of Japan, through a strait, formed by a long chain of islands, and returned without having discovered the passage.

In 1741, Bering cruised all over this sea, in company with De L'Isle de la Croyere, the astro-

nomer, of the same family of De L'Isle, which has produced such excellent geographers: another captain likewise went upon the same discovery. They both made the coast of America, to the northward of California. Thus the north-east passage, so long sought after, was at length discovered; but there were no refreshments to be met with in these barren coasts. Their fresh water failed them, and part of the crew perished with the scurvy. They saw the northern bank of California for above an hundred miles, and saw some leathern canoes, with just such a sort of people in them as the Canadians. All their endeavours, however, proved fruitless. Bering ended his life in an island, to which he gave his name. The other captain, happening to be closer in with the Californian coast, sent ten of his people on shore, who never returned. The Captain, after waiting for them in vain, found himself obliged to return to Kamtschatka, and De L'Isle died as he was going on shore. Such are the disasters that have generally attended every new attempt upon the northern seas. But what advantages may yet arive from these powerful and dangerous discoveries, time alone must reveal.

We have now described all the different provinces that compose the Russian dominions, from Finland to the sea of Japan. The largest parts of this empire have been all united at different times, as has been the case in all other kingdoms in the world. The Scythians, Huns, Massagetes, Slavians, Cimbrians, Getes, and Sarmatians are now subjects to the Czar. The Russians, properly so called, are the ancient Roxolani or Slavi.

Upon reflection, we shall find that most states were formed in the same manner. The French

are an assemblage of Goths, of Danes ca'led Normans, of northern Germans, called Burgundians; of Franks, Alemanians, and some Romans mixed with the ancient Celts. In Rome and Italy there are sevral families descended from the people of the north, but none that we know of from the ancient Romans. The supreme pontiff is frequently the offspring of a Lombard, a Goth, a Teuton, or a Cimbrian. The Spaniards are a race of Arabs, Carthaginians, Jews, Tyrians, Visigoths, and Vandals, incorporated with the ancient inhabitants of the country. When nations are thus intermixcd, it is a long time before they are civilized, or even before their language is formed. Some indeed receive these sooner others latter. Polity and the liberal arts are so difficult to establish, and the new raised structure is so often destroyed by revolutions, that we may wonder all nations are not so barbarous as Tartars.

C H A P. II.

Continuation of the description of Russia, population, finances, arms, customs, religion. State of Russia before Peter the Great.

THE more civilized a country is, the better it is peopled. Thus China and India are more populous than any other empires, because, after a multitude of revolutions, which changed the face of sublunary affairs, these two nations made the earliest establishments in civil society. The antiquity of their government, which has subsisted, upwards of four thousand years, supposes, as we have already observed, many essays and efforts in preceding ages. The Russians came very late; but the arts having been introduced amongst them in their full perfection, it has happened, that they made more progress in fifty years, than any other nation had done before them in five hundred. The country is far from being populous, in proportion to its extent; but such as it is, it has as great a number of inhabitants as any other state in Christendom. From the capitation lists, and the register of merchants, artificers, and male peasants, I might safely assert, that Russia, at present, contains at least twenty four millions of inhabitants: of these 24 millions, the greatest part are villains or bondmen, as in Poland, several provinces of Germany, and formerly throughout all Europe. The estate of a gentleman in Russia and Poland is computed, not by his increase in money, but by the number of his slaves.

The following is a list taken in 1747, of all the males who paid the capitation or poll-tax.

Merchants or tradesmen	-	-	198.00	B
Handicrafts	-	-	165.00	B
Peasants incorporated with the merchants and Handicrafts	-	-	1950	B
Peasants called Odonoskis, who contribute to maintain the militia	-	-	430220	B
Others who did not contribute thereto			26c80	B
Workmen of different trades, whose parents are not known	-	-	1000	B
Others who are not incorporated with the companies of tradesmen	-	-	4700	B
Peasants immediately dependant on the crown, about	-	-	555000	B
Persons employed in the mines belonging to the crown, partly Christians, partly Mahometans and Pagans	-	-	64000	B
Other Peasants belonging to the crown, who work in the mines, and in private manufactures	-	-	24200	B
New convents to the Greek church			57000	B
Tartars and Ostiaks (peasants)	-	-	241000	B
Mouffes, Tartars, Mordvets, and others whether Pagans or Christians, employed by the admiralty	-	-	7800	B
Tartars subject to contribution, called Tepteris Boblitz, &c.	-	-	28y00	B
Bondmen to several merchants and other privileged persons, who, though not landholders, are allowed to have slaves	-	-	9100	B
Peasants in the lands set apart for the support of the crown	-	-	418.00	B
Peasants of the lands belonging to her majesty, independently of the rights of				P

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the crown	- - - -	60500
Peasants on the lands confiscated to the crown	- - - -	13600
Bondmen belonging to gentlemen	-	3550000
Bondmen belonging to the assembly of the clergy, and who defray their expences	- - - -	37500
Bondmen belonging to bishops	- -	116400
Bondmen belonging to convents, whose numbers were reduced by Peter the Great	- - -	721500
Bondmen belonging to the cathedral and parish churches	- - -	23700
Peasants employed as labourers in the docks of the admiralty, or in other public works, about	- - -	4000
Labourers in the mines, and in private manufactures	- - -	16000
Peasants on the lands assigned to the principal manufactures	- -	14500
Labourers in the mines belonging to the crown	- - - -	3000
Bastards brought up by the clergy	- -	40
Sectaries called Rakomiky	- - -	2200
Total		<u>6646390</u>

Here we have a round number of six millions six hundred forty-six thousand three hundred and ninety male persons, who pay the poll tax. In this number are included boys and old men, but girls and women are not reckoned, nor boys born between the making of one register of the lands and another. Now, if we only reckon triple the number of heads, subject to be taxed, including women and girls, we shall find near 20 millions of souls.

To this number we may add the military list which amount to 40,000 men. Besides, neither the nobility nor clergy, who are computed at 200,000 are subject to this capitation.

Foreigners, of whatever country or profession are likewise exempt: as also the inhabitants of the conquered countries, namely, Livonia, Estonia, Ingria, Carelia, and a part of Finland, the Ukraine and the Don Cossacks, the Cossacks, and other Tartars, Samojedes, the Laplanders, the Otiacks, and all the idolatrous people of Siberia, a country of greater extent than China, are not included in this list.

By the same calculation, it is impossible that the total of the inhabitants of Russia should amount to less than 24 millions. At this rate, there are eight persons to every square mile. The English ambassador, whom I have mentioned before, allows only five; but he certainly was not furnished with such faithful memoirs, as those with which I have been favoured.

Russia therefore is exactly five times less populous than Spain, but contains near four times the number of inhabitants: it is almost as populous as France or Germany; but if we consider its vast extent, the number of souls is thirty times less.

There is one important remark to be made in regard to this enumeration, namely, that out of 6,640,000 people liable to the poll-tax, there are about 900,000 that belong to the Russian clergy, without reckoning either the ecclesiastics of the conquered countries, of the Ukraine, or of Siberia.

Therefore, out of seven persons liable to the poll-tax the clergy have one; but nevertheless they are far from possessing the seventh part of the

whole revenues of the state, as is the case in many other kingdoms, where they have at least a seventh of all estates; for their peasants pay a capitation to the sovereign; and the other taxes of the crown of Russia, in which the clergy have no share, are very considerable.

This valuation is very different from that of all other writers on the affairs of Russia; so that foreign ministers who have transmitted memoirs of this state to their courts, have been greatly mistaken. The archives of the empire are the only things to be consulted.

It is very probable, that Russia has been better peopled than it is at present; before the small pox that came from the extremities of Arabia, and the great pox that came from America, had spread over these climates, where they have now taken root. The world owes these two dreadful scourges, which have depopulated it more than all its wars, the one to Mahomet, and the other to Christopher Columbus. The plague, which is a native of Africa, seldom approaches the countries of the north. Besides, the people of those countries, from Sarmatia, to the Tartars who dwell beyond the great wall, having overspread the world by their irruptions, this ancient nursery of the human species must have been surprisingly diminished.

In this vast extent of country, there are said to be about 7400 monks, and 1500 nuns, notwithstanding the care taken by Peter the Great to reduce their numbers; a care worthy the legislator of an empire, where the human race is so remarkably deficient. There 15,000 persons, thus immured and lost to the state have (as the reader may have observed) 72,000 bondmen to till their lands, which is evidently too great a number.

There cannot be a stronger proof how difficult it is to eradicate abuses of a long standing.

I find, by a list of the revenues of the empire in 1735, that reckoning the tribute paid by the Tatars, with all taxes and duties in money, the sum total amounted to 12 millions of rubles, which make sixty five millions of French livres, exclusive of tributes in kind. This moderate sum was at that time sufficient to maintain 9,500 men, as well sea as land forces; but both the revenues and troops are augmented since that time.

The customs, debts, and manners of the Russians, ever bore a greater affinity to those of Asia than to those of Europe: such was the old custom of receiving tribute in kind, of defraying the expences of ambassadors on their journeys, and during their residence in the country, and of never appearing at caurch, or in the royal presence with a sword; an oriental custom directly the reverse of that ridiculous and barbarous one amongst us, of addressing ourselves to God, to our king to our friends and to our women, with an offensive weapon, which hangs down to the bottom of the leg. The long robe worn on public days, had a more noble air than the short habits of the western nations of Europe. A vest lined and turn'd up with fur, with a long scimiter, adorned with jewels for festival days; and those high turbans, which add to the stature, were much more striking to the eye than our perukes and close hats, and more suitable to cold climates; but this ancient dress of all nations seems not to be so well contrived for war, nor so convenient for working people. Most of their other customs were rustic; but we must not imagine, that their manners were as barbarous as some writers would have us believe.

Albert Krants relates a story of an Italian ambassador, whom the czar ordered to have his hat nailed on his head, for not pulling it off while he was making his speech to him. Others attribute this adventure to a Tartar, and others again to a French ambassador.

Olearius pretends, that the czar Michael Theodorowitz, banished the marquis of Exideuil, ambassador from Henry IV. of France, into Siberia; but it is certain, that this monarch sent no ambassador to Moscow, and there never was a marquis of Exeduil in France. In the same manner do travellers speak about the country of Borandia, and of the trade they have carried on with the people of Nova Zembla, which is scarcely inhabited at all, and the long conversations they have had with some of the Samojedes, as if they understood their language. Were the enormous compilations of voyages to be cleared of every thing that is not true nor useful in them, both the works and the public would be gainers by it.

The Russian government resembled that of the Turks in respect to the standing forces, or guards called Strelitzes, who, like the Janizaries, sometimes disposed of the crown, and frequently disturbed the state as much as they defended it. Their number was about 40,000. Those who were dispersed in the provinces, subsisted by rapine and plunder; those in Moscow lived like citizens, followed trades, did no duty, and carried their insolence to the greatest excess; in short there was no other way to preserve peace and good order in the kingdom, but by breaking them; a very necessary, and at the same time a very dangerous step.

The public revenue does not exceed five millions of rubles, or about 25 millions of French livres. This was sufficient when czar Peter came to the crown to maintain the ancient mediocrity, but was not a third part of what was necessary to go certain lengths, and to render himself and people considerable in Europe: but at the same time many of their taxes were paid in kind, according to the Turkish custom, which is less burthenome to the people than that of paying their tributes in money.

Of the title of Czar.

As to the title of czar it may possibly come from the Tzars or Tchars of the kingdom of Casan. When John or Ivan Basiliades, compleated the conquest of this kingdom in the 16th century, which had been begun by his grandfather, who afterwards lost it, i.e. assumed this title, which his successors have retained ever since. Before John, Basiliades, the sovereigns of Russia took the title of *Velike Knez*, i. e. *Great prince, great lord, great chief*, which the christian nations afterwards rendered by that of *great duke*. Czar Michael Theodorowitz, when he received the Holstein embassy, took to himself the following titles "Great *knez*, and great lord, conservator of all the Russians, prince of Wolodomer, Moscow, Novogorod, &c. czar of Catani, czar of Astracan, and czar of Siberia" *Tzar* was therefore, a title belonging to these eastern princes; and, therefore, it is more probable to have been derived from the *Tjbas* of Persia, than from the Roman Cæsars, whom the Siberian *tzars*, on the banks of the *Oby*, can hardly be supposed to have ever heard.

No title, however pompous, is of any consequence, if those who bear it are not great and powerful of themselves. The word *emperor*, which originally signified no more than *general of the army*, became the title of the sovereign of the Roman republic: it is now given to the supreme governor of all the Russians more justly than to any other potentate, if we consider the power and extent of his dominions.

RELIGION.

The established religion of this country has ever since the 11th century been that of the Greek church, so called in opposition to the Latin; tho' there were always a greater number of Mahometan and Pagan provinces, than of those inhabited by Christians. Siberia, as far as China, was in a state of Idolatry; and in some of the provinces, they were utter strangers to all kind of religion.

Perry the engineer, and Baron Strahlemaerg, who both resided so many years in Russia, tell us, that they found more sincerity and probity among the Pagans, than the other inhabitants; not that paganism made them more virtuous; but their manner of living, which was that of the primitive ages, as they are called, freed them from all the tumultuous passions; and in consequence, they were known for their integrity.

Christianity did not get footing in Russia, and the other countries of the north, till very late. It is said that a princess named Olha, first introduced it, about the end of the 10th century, as Clotilda, niece to an Arian prince, did among the Franks; the wife of Mieszus, duke of Poland, among the Poles; and the sister of the em-

peror Henry II among the Hungarians. Women are naturally easily persuaded by the ministers of religion, and as easily persuade the other part of mankind.

It is further added, that this princess Olha caused herself to be baptised at Constantinople, by the name of Helena; and that as soon as she embraced christianity, the emperor John Zimisces fell in love with her. It is most likely that she was a widow; however, she refused the emperor. The example of the princess Olha, or Olga, as she is called, did not at first make any great number of proselytes. Her son *, who reigned a long time, was not of the same way of thinking as his mother; but her grandson Wolodimer, who was born of a concubine, having mounted the throne, sued for the alliance of Basiles, emperor of Constantinople but could obtain it only on condition of receiving baptism: and this event, which happened in the year 987, is the epocha when the Greek church was established in Ruslia. Photins, the patriarch, so famous for his immense erudition, his disputes with the church of Rome, and for his misfortunes, sent a person to baptise Wolodimer, in order to add this part of the world to the Patriarchal See †.

Wolodimer, therefore, completed the work which his grandmother had begun. A Greek was made the first Metropolitan, or Patriarch of Russia; and from this time, the Russians adopted an alphabet, taken partly from the Greek. This would have been of advantage to them, had they

* His name was Sowastowlaw.

† This anecdote is taken from a private M S. intitled, "The Ecclesiastical Government of Russia," which is likewise deposited in the public library.

not still retained the principles of their language, which is the Slavonian, in every thing, but a few terms relating to their liturgy and church government. One of the Greek patriarchs, named Jeremiah, having a suit depending before the Divan, came to Moscow to solicit the assistance of that court, where after some time, he resigned his authority over the Russian churches, and consecrated patriarch, the Archbishop of Novogorod, named Job. This was in the year 1588, from which time the Russian church became as independent as its empire. The patriarch of Russia has ever since been consecrated by the Russian bishops, and not by the patriarch of Constantinople. He ranked in the Greek church next to the patriarch of Jerusalem; but he was in fact the only free and powerful patriarch, and consequently, the only real one. Those of Jerusalem Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, are mercenary chiefs of a church, enslaved by the Turks; and even the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Antioch are no longer considered as such, having no more credit or influence in Turkey, than the rabbins of the Jewish synagogues settled there.

It was from a person who was patriarch of the Russias, that Peter the Great was descended in a direct line. These new prelates soon wanted to share the sovereign authority with the czars. They thought it not enough that their prince walked bare-headed once a year before the patriarch, leading his horse by the bridle. These external marks of respect only served to increase their thirst for rule; a passion which proved the scourge of great troubles in Russia, as well as in other countries.

Nicon, a person whom the monks look upon as a saint and who was patriarch in the reign of

Alexis, the Father of Peter the Great, wanted to raise his dignity above that of the throne; for he not only assumed the privilege of sitting by the side of the czar in the senate, but pretended that neither war nor peace could be made without his consent. His authority was so great that being supported by his immense wealth, and by his intrigues with the clergy and people, he kept his master in a kind of subjection. He had the means to excommunicate some senators who rebuked his excessive insolence; till at length, Alexis finding himself not powerful enough to depose him by his own authority, was obliged to convene a synod of all the bishops. There the patriarch was accused of having received money from the Poles; and being convicted, was deposed and confined for the remainder of his days in a monastery: after which the prelates chose another patriarch in his stead.

From the first infancy of christianity in Russia, there have been several sects there, as well as in other countries; for sects are as frequently the fruits of ignorance as of pretended knowledge: but Russia is the only christian state of any considerable extent, in which religion has no excited civil wars, though it has felt some occasional tumults.

The Raskolnikys, who consist at present of about 2000 males, and who are mentioned in the foregoing list *, are the most ancient sect of any in this country. It was established in the 12th century, by some enthusiasts, who had a superficial knowledge of the New Testament: they made use then, and still do, of the old pretence of all sectaries, that of following the letter, and accused all o-

* See page 54.

ther christians of remissness. They would not permit a priest, who had drank brandy, to confer baptism; they affirmed, in the words of our Saviour, that there is neither a first nor a last, among the faithful; and held that one of the elect might kill himself for the love of his Saviour. According to them, it is a great sin to repeat the halleluja three times; and, therefore, repeat it only twice. The benediction is to be given only with three fingers. In other respects, no society can be more regular or strict in its morals. They live like the quakers, and, like them, do not admit any other christians into their assemblies, which is the reason that these have accused them of all the abominations of which the heathens accused the primitive Galileans; these latter, the Gnostics, and with which the Roman Catholics have charged the Protestants. They have been frequently accused of cutting the throat of an infant, and drinking its blood; and of mixing together in their private ceremonies, without distinction of kindred, age, or even of sex. They have been persecuted at times, and then they have shut themselves up in their hamlets, set fire to their houses, and thrown themselves into the flames. Peter took the only method of reclaiming them, which was by letting them live in peace.

But to conclude; in all this vast empire, there are but 28 episcopal sees, and in Peter's time, there were but 22. This small number was perhaps, one of the causes to which the Russian church owes its tranquillity. So very circumscribed was the knowledge of the clergy, that the czar Theodore, brother to Peter the Great, was the first who introduced the custom of singing psalms in churches.

Theodore and Peter, especially the latter admitted indifferently into their councils and their armies, those of the Greek, and the Latin, the Lutheran, and the Calvinist communion, leaving every one at liberty to serve God after his own conscience, provided he did his duty to the state. At that time, there was not one Latin church in this great empire of 2000 leagues, till Peter established some new manufactures at Astracan, when there were about sixty Roman Catholic families, under the direction of the capuchins; but the jesuits endeavouring to establish themselves in his dominions, he drove them out by an edict, published in the month of April 1718. He tolerated the capuchins as an insignificant set of monks, but considered the jesuits as dangerous politicians.

The Greek church has at once the honour and satisfaction to see its communion extended throughout an empire of 2000 leagues in length, while that of Rome is not in possession of half that tract in Europe. Those of the Greek communion have, at all times been particularly attentive to maintain an equality between theirs and Latin church; and always upon their guard against the zeal of the see of Rome, which they look upon as ambition; because in fact, that church whose power is very much circumscribed in our hemisphere, and yet assumes the title of *universal*, has always endeavoured to act up to that title.

The Jews never made any settlement in Russia, as they have done in most of the other states of Europe, from Constantinople to Rome. The Russians have carried on their trade by themselves, or by the help of the nations settled among them. Theirs is the only country of the Greek communion, where synagogues are not seen by the side

of the christian temples.

Conclusion of the State of RUSSIA, before PETER the GREAT.

Russia is indebted solely to the czar Peter for its great influence in the affairs of Europe; being of no consideration in any other reign, since it embraced christianity. Before this period, the Russians made the same figure on the Black Sea, that the Normans did afterwards on the coasts of the ocean. In the reign of the emperor Heraclius they fitted out an armament of 40,000 small barks, appeared before Constantinople, which they besieged, and imposed a tribute on the Greek emperors; but the grand knez Wolodimer, being wholly taken up with the care of establishing christianity in his dominions, and wearied out with intestine broils in his own family, weakened his dominions by dividing them between his children. They almost all fell a prey to the Tartars, who held Russia in subjection near two hundred years. At length John Basilides freed it from slavery, and enlarged its boundaries; but after his time, it was ruined again by civil wars.

Before the time of Peter the Great, Russia was neither so powerful, so well cultivated, so populous, nor so rich as at present. It had no possessions in Finland, nor in Livonia; and this latter alone had been long worth more than all Siberia. The Cossacks were still unsubdued, nor were the people of Astracan reduced to obedience; what little trade was carried on, was rather to their disadvantage. The White Sea, the Baltic, the Pontus Euxinus, the sea of Asoph, and the Caspian

sea, were entirely useless to a nation that had not a single ship, nor even a term in their language to express a fleet. If nothing more had been wanting but to be superior to the Tartars, and the other nations of the north, as far as China, the Russians undoubtedly had that advantage; but they were to be brought upon an equality with civilized nations, and to be in a condition one day of even surpassing several of them. Such an undertaking appeared altogether impracticable, inasmuch as they had not a single ship at sea, and were absolutely ignorant of military discipline by land; nay, the most common manufactures were hardly encouraged, and agriculture itself, the **primum mobile** of trade, was neglected. This requires the utmost attention and encouragement on the part of a government; and it is to this that the English are indebted, for finding in their corn a treasure far superior to their woollen manufacture.

This gross neglect of the necessary arts sufficiently shews, that the people of Russia had no idea of the polite arts, which become necessary in their turn, when we have cultivated the others. They might indeed have sent some of the natives to gain instruction among foreigners; but the difference of languages, manners, and religion, opposed it. Besides, there was a law of state and religion equally sacred and pernicious, which prohibited any Russian from going out of his country, and thus seemed to devote this people to eternal ignorance. They were in possession of the most extensive dominions in the universe and yet every thing was wanted amongst them. At length Peter was born, and Russia became a civilized state.

Happily, of all the great lawgivers who have lived in the world, Peter is the only one whose history is well known. Those of Theseus and Romulus, who did far less than him, and of the founders of all well governed states, are blended with the most absurd fictions; whereas here, we have the advantage of writing truths, which would pass for fictions, were they not so well attested.

C H A P. III.

The ancestors of PETER the GREAT.

THE family of Peter the Great have been in possession of the throne ever since the year 1613. Before that time, Russia had undergone revolutions, which had retarded the reformation of her police, and the introduction of the liberal arts. This has been the fate of all human societies. No kingdom ever experienced more cruel troubles. In the year 1597, the Tyrant Boris Godonow assassinated Demetrius, the lawful heir, and usurped the empire. A young monk took the name of Demetrius, pretending to be that prince who had escaped from his murderers, and with the assistance of the Poles, and a considerable party (which every tyrant has against him) he drove out the usurper, and seized the crown himself. The imposture was discovered as soon as he came to the sovereignty, because the people were not pleased with him; and he was murdered. Three other false Demetrius's started up one after another. Such a succession of impostors supposes a country in the utmost distraction. The less men are civilized, the more easily they are imposed on. It may

readily be conceived, how much these frauds augmented the public confusion and misfortunes. The Poles who had begun the revolutions, by setting up the first false Demetrius, were on the point of being masters of Russia. The Swedes shared in the spoils on the coast of Finland, and laid claim to the crown. The state seemed on the verge of utter destruction.

In the midst of these calamities, an assembly, composed of the principal boyars, chose for their sovereign, a young man of fifteen years of age; this happened in 1613, and did not seem a very likely method of putting an end to these troubles. This young man was Michael Romanow*, grandfather to Czar Peter, and son to the archbishop of Rostow, surnamed Philaret, and of a nun, and related by the mother's side to the ancient Czars.

It must be observed, that this archbishop was a powerful nobleman, whom the Tyrant Boris had obliged to become priest. His wife Scheremetow was likewise compelled to take the veil; this was the ancient custom of the western tyrants of the Latin church, as that of putting out the eyes, was with the Greek Christians. The tyrant Demetrius made Philaret archbishop of Rostow, and sent him ambassador to Poland, where he was detained prisoner by the Poles who were then at war with the Russians; so little was the law of nations known to the different people of these times. During his father's confinement, that young Romanow was elected Czar. The archbishop was exchanged against some Polish prisoners; and at his return, his son created him patriarch, and the old man was in fact king under his son's name.

* Some pronounce it *Romano*:

If such a government appears extraordinary to strangers, the marriages of Czar Michael Romanow will seem still more so. The Russian princes had never intermarried with foreign states since the year 1490, or after they became masters of Casan and Astracan; they seem to have followed the Asiatic customs in almost every thing, and especially that of marrying only among their own subjects.

This conformity to the ancient customs of Asia, was still more conspicuous in the ceremonies observed at the marriage of the czar. A number of the most beautiful women in the province were sent for to court, where they were received by the grand governante of the court, who provided apartments for them in her own houie, where they all eat together. The czar paid them visits, sometimes incognito, and sometimes in his real character. The wedding day was fixed, without its being declared on whom the choice had fallen. At the appointed time, the happy she was presented with a rich wedding suit, and other dressses were given to the rest of the fair candidates, who then returned home. There have been four instances of these marriages.

In this manner was Michael Romanow espoused to Eudocia, the daughter of a poor gentleman, named Streschneu. He was employed, in ploughing in his grounds with his servants, when one of the lords of the bed-chamber came to him with presents from the czar, and to acquaint him that his daughter was placed on the throne. The name of the princess is still held in the highest veneration by the Russians. This custom is greatly different from ours, but not the less respectable on that account.

It is necessary to observe, that before Romanow was elected czar, a strong party had made choice of prince Ladislaus, son to Sigismund II. king of Poland. At the same time, the provinces, bordering on Sweden, had offered the crown to a brother of Gustavus Adolphus: so that Russia was in the same situation then in which we have frequently seen Poland, where the right of electing a king has been the source of civil wars. But the Russians did not follow the example of the Poles, who entered into a compact with the prince whom they elected; notwithstanding they had started from the oppression of tyrants, yet they voluntarily submitted to a young man without making any conditions with him.

Russia never was an elective kingdom; but the male issue of the ancient sovereigns failing, and six czars, or pretenders, having perished miserably in the late troubles, there was, as we have observed, a necessity for electing a monarch; and this election occasioned fresh wars with Poland and Sweden, who maintained, with force of arms, their pretended rights to the crown of Russia. The right of governing a nation against its own will, can never be long supported. The Poles on their side, after having advanced as far as Moscow and exercised all the ravages in which the military expeditions of those times chiefly consisted, concluded a truce of fifteen years. By this truce Poland remained in possession of the duchy of Smolensko in which the Boristhenes has its source. The Swedes also made peace, in virtue of which they remained in possession of Ingria, and deprived the Russians of all communication with the Baltic sea, so that this empire was separated more than ever from the rest of Europe.

Michael Romanow, after this peace, reigned quietly, without making any alteration in the state, either to the improvement or corruption of the administration. After his death, which happened in 1645, his son Alexis Michaelowitz (or son of Michael) ascended the throne by hereditary right. It may be observed, the czars were crowned by the patriarch of Russia, according to the ceremonies in use at Constantinople, except that the Patriarch of Russia was seated on the same ascent with the sovereign, and constantly affected an equality highly insulting to the supreme power.

ALEXIS MICHAELOWIZ, the son of Michael.

Alexis was married in the same manner as his father and from among the young women presented to him, he chose the one who appeared the most amiable in his eyes. He married a daughter of the boyar Meloflaufki in 1647; his second wife whom he married in 1671, was of the family of Naritskin, and his favourite Morosou was married to another. There cannot be a more suitable title found for this favourite than that of visir, for he governed the empire in a despotic manner, and by his great power, excited several commotions among the Strelitzes, and the populace, as frequently happens at Constantinople.

The reign of Alexis was disturbed by bloody insurrections, and by domestic and foreign wars. A chief of the Don Cossacks, named Stenko-Rasin, endeavoured to make himself master of Astracan, and was for a long time very formidable: but being at length defeated and taken prisoner, he ended his life by the hands of the executioner; like all those of this stamp, who have nothing to ex-

pect but a throne or a scaffold. About 12,000 of his adherents are said to have been hanged on the high road of Astracan. In this part of the world, men being uninfluenced by morality, were to be governed only by rigour; and from this severity, frequently carried on to a degree of cruelty, arose slavery, and a secret thirst of revenge.

Alexis had a war with the Poles that proved successful and terminated in a peace, which secured to him the possession of Smolensko, Kiow, and the Ukraine: but he was unfortunate against the Swedes, and the boundaries of the Russian empire were contracted within a very narrow compass on that side of the kingdom.

The Turks were at that time his most formidable enemies; they invaded Poland, and threatened the dominions of the czar that bordered upon Crim Tartary the ancient Laurica Chersonesus. In 1671, they took the important city of Kaminieck, and all that belonged to Poland in the Ukraine. The Cossacks of that country, ever averse to subjection, knew not whether they belonged to the Turks, Poland, or Russia. Sultan Mahomet IV who had conquered the Poles, and had just imposed a tribute upon them, demanded with all the haughtiness of an Ottoman victor, that the czar should evacuate his possessions in the Ukraine, but received as haughty a denial from that prince. Men did not know at that time how to disguise their pride, by an outside of civility. The sultan in his letter, styled the sovereign of the Russians only christian Hospodar, and entitled himself, "most gracious majesty, king of the universe." The czar replied in these terms, "that he scorned to submit to a Mahometan dog, and that his scimiter was as good as the Grand Seignior's sabre."

Alexis at that time formed a design which seemed to presage the influence which the Russian empire would one day obtain in the christian world. He sent ambassadors to the Pope, and to almost all the great sovereigns in Europe, excepting France, (which was in alliance with the Turks) in order to establish a league against the Ottoman Porte. His ambassadors at the court of Rome succeeded only in not being obliged to kiss the Pope's toe; and in other courts they met only with unprofitable good wishes, the quarrels of the christian princes between themselves, and the juring interests arising from those quarrels, having constantly prevented them from uniting against the common enemy of christianity.

In the mean time, the Turks threatened to chastise the Poles, who refused to pay their tribute: czar Alexis assisted on the side of Crim Tartary, and John Sobieski, general of the crown, wiped off his country's stain, in the blood of the Turks, at the famous battle of Choczim in 1674, which paved his way to the throne. Alexis disputed this very throne with him, and proposed to unite his extensive dominions to Poland, as the Jagellons had done; but in regard to Lithuania, the greatness of his offer was the cause of its being rejected. He is said to have been very deserving of the new kingdom, by the manner in which he governed his own. He was the first who caused a body of laws to be digested in Russia, though imperfect; and introduced both linen and silk manufactures, which indeed were not long kept up; nevertheless, he had the merit of their first establishment. He peopled the deserts about the Wolga and the Kama, with Lithuanian, Polish, and Tartarian families, whom he had taken prisoners

in his wars: before his reign, all prisoners of war were the slaves of those to whose lot they fell. Alexis employed them in agriculture: he did his utmost endeavours to introduce discipline among those troops; in a word, he was worthy of being the father of Peter the Great; but he had no time to perfect what he had begun, being snatched away by a sudden death, at the age of 46, in the beginning of the year 1677, according to our style, which is eleven days forwarder than that of Russia.

FOEDOR, or THEODORE ALEXOWITZ.

Upon the death of Alexis, son of Michael, all fell again into confusion. He left by his first marriage, two princes, and two princesses. Theodore, the eldest, ascended the throne at fifteen years of age. He was a prince of a weak and sickly constitution, but of merit superior to his bodily infirmities. His brother Alexis had caused him to be acknowledged his successor, a year before his death; a conduct observed by the kings of France from Hugh Capet, down to Lewis the Young, and by many other crowned heads.

The second son of Alexis was Iwan or John, who was still worse treated by nature than his brother Theodore, being almost blind and dumb, very infirm and frequently attacked with convulsions. Of six daughters, born of this first marriage, the only one who made any figure in Europe, was Princes Sophia, who was remarkable for her great talents; but unhappily still more so for the mischief she intended against Peter the Great.

Alexis, by his second marriage with another of his subjects daughter of the boyar Naritskin, had Peter, and the princess Nathalia. Peter was born in the 10th of May (or the tenth of June new stile) in the year 1672 ; and was but four years old when he lost his father. As the children of a second marriage were not much regarded in Russia, it was little expected that he would one day mount the throne.

It had ever been the character of the family of Romanow to civilize their state. It was also that of Theodore. We have already remarked in speaking of Moscow, that this prince encouraged the inhabitants of that city, to build a great number of stone houses. He likewise enlarged that capital, and made several useful regulations in the general police ; but by attempting to reform the boyars, he made them all his enemies : besides, he was not possessed of sufficient knowledge, vigour, or resolution, to venture upon making a general reformation. The war with the Turks, or rather with the Crim Tartars, in which he was constantly engaged with alternate success, would not permit a prince of his weak state of health, to attempt so great a work. Theodore, like the rest of his predecessors, married one of his own subjects, a native of the frontiers of Poland ; but having lost her in less than a year after their nuptials, he took for his second wife, in 1682, Martha Matweona, daughter of the secretary Naritskin *. Some months after this marriage, he was seized with the disorder which ended his days, and died without leaving any children. As the czars married without re-

* She was the daughter of Matthias Apraxin, a person on whom Theodore had lately conferred nobility.

gard to birth, they might likewise (at least at that time) appoint a successor without respect to primogeniture. The dignity of consort and heir to the sovereign seemed to be entirely the reward of merit; and in that respect, the custom of this empire was much preferable to the customs of more civilized states.

Theodore, before he expired, seeing that his brother Iwan was by his natural infirmities incapable of governing, nominated his younger brother Peter, heir to the empire of Russia. Peter, who was then only in his tenth year, had already given the most promising hopes.

If, on the one hand, the custom of raising a subject to the rank of czarina, was favourable to the females, there was another which was no less hard upon them; namely, that the daughters of the czars were very seldom married, but were most of them obliged to pass their lives in a monastery.

The princess Sophia, third daughter, of czar Alexis by his first marriage, was possessed of abilities, equally great and dangerous. Perceiving that her brother Theodore, had not long to live, she did not retire to a convent; but finding herself situated between two brothers, one of whom was incapable of governing, through his natural inability; and the other, on account of his youth, she conceived the design of placing herself at the head of the empire. Hence, in the last hours of Czar Theodore, she attempted to act the part that Pulcheria had formerly played with her brother, the emperor Theodosius.

C H A P. IV.

JOHN and PETER.

Horrible sedition among the STRELITZES*.

CZAR Theodore's eyes were scarcely closed †, when the nomination of a prince of only ten years old to the throne, the exclusion of the elder brother, and the intrigues of the princess Sophia, their sister, excited a most bloody revolt amongst the Strelitzes. Never did the Janissaries, nor the Praetorian guards, exercise more horrible barbarities. The insurrection began two days after the interment of Theodore, when they all ran to arms in the Cremelin, which is the imperial palace at Moscow. There they began with accusing nine of their colonels, for keeping back part of their pay. The ministry was obliged to break the colonels, and to pay the Strelitzes the money they demanded: but this did not satisfy them; they insisted upon having these nine officers delivered up to them, and condemned them by a majority of votes, to suffer the *Battgs* or *Kasut*, the manner of which punishment is as follows:

The delinquent is stripped naked, and laid flat on his belly, while two executioners beat over the back with switches of small canes, till the judge, who stands by to see the sentence put in execution, says, "It is enough." The colonels, after being thus treated by their men, were obliged to return

* Extracted wholly from the memoirs sent from Moscow and Petersburgh.

† 1682.

them thanks, according to the custom of the eastern nations; where criminals, after undergoing their punishment, must kiss the judge's hand. Besides complying with this custom, the officers gave them a sum of money, which was something more than the custom.

While the Strelitzes thus began to make themselves formidable, the princess Sophia, who secretly encouraged them, in order to lead them by degrees from crime to crime, held a meeting at her house, consisting of the princesses of the blood, the generals of the army, the boyars, the patriarch, the bishops, and even some of the principal merchants; where she represented to them, that prince John by right of birth and merit, was entitled to the empire, the reins of which she intended to keep in her own hands. At the breaking up of the assembly, she caused a promise to be made to the Strelitzes, of an augmentation of pay, besides considerable presents. Her emissaries were in particular employed to stir up the soldiery against the Nariskin family, especially the two brothers of the young dowager czarina, the mother of Peter the First. These persuaded the Strelitzes, that one of the brothers, named John, had put on the imperial robes, had seated himself on the throne, and had attempted to strangle prince John; adding, moreover, that the late czar Theodore had been poisoned by a villain, named Daniel Vongad, a Dutch physician. At last Sophia put into their hands a list of forty noblemen whom she stiled enemies to their corps, and to the state, and as such worthy of death. These proceedings exactly resembled the proscriptions of Sylla, and the Roman triumvirate, which had been revived by Christiern II. in Denmark and Sweden. This

may serve to shew, that such cruelties prevail in all countries in times of anarchy and confusion. The mutineers began the tragedy with throwing the two knezes, or princes, Dolgorouki and Matheof, out of the palace windows; whom the Strelitzes received upon the points of their spears; then stripped them, and dragged their dead bodies into the great square; after this they rushed into the palace, where meeting with Athanasius Nariskin, a brother of the young czarina, and one of the uncles of czar Peter, they murdered him in like manner; then breaking open the door of the neighbouring church, where three of the proscribed persons had taken refuge, they drag them from the altar, strip them naked and stab them to death with knives.

They were so blinded with their fury, that seeing a young nobleman of the family of Soltikoff, a great favourite of theirs, and who was not included in the list of the proscribed, and some of them mistaking him for John Nariskin, whom they were in search of, they murdered him upon the spot; and what plainly shews the manners of those times, after having discovered their error, they carried the body of young Soltikoff to his father to bury it; and the wretched parent, far from daring to complain, gave them a considerable reward for bringing him the mangled body of his son. Being reproached by his wife and daughters, and the widow of the deceased for his weakness, "Let us wait for another opportunity of being revenged," said the old man. These words being overheard by some of the soldiers, they returned furiously back into the room, dragged the aged parent by the hair, and cut his throat at his own door.

Another party of the Strelitzes, who were

scouring the city in search of the Dutch physician Vongad, met with his son, of whom they inquired for his father: the youth trembling, replied, he did not know where he was; upon which they immediately dispatched him. Soon after a German physician falling in their way, "You are a doctor, said they, and if you did not poison our master Theodore, you have poisoned others, and therefore merit death," and thereupon killed him.

At length they found the Dutchman, of whom they were in quest, disguised in the garb of a beggar; they instantly drag him before the palace: the princesses who loved this worthy man, and placed great confidence in his skill, begged the Strelitzes to spare him, assuring them that he was a very good physician, and had taken all possible care of their brother Theodore. The Strelitzes made answer, that he not only deserved to die as a physician, but also as a sorcerer; and that they had found in his house a great dried toad, and the skin of a serpent. They furthermore required to have young Nariikin delivered up to them whom they had searched for in vain for two days; alleging, that he was certainly in the palace, and that they would set fire to it, unless he was put into their hands. The sister of John Nariikin, and the other princesses, terrified by their menaces went to acquaint their unhappy brother in the place of his concealment, with what had passed: upon which the patriarch heard his confession, administers the viaticum and extreme unction to him, and then taking an image of the blessed virgin which was said to perform miracles, he leads the young man forth by the hand, and presents him to the Strelitzes, shewing them, at the same time, the image of the virgin. The princesses, who in tears sur-

rounded Nariskin, falling upon their knees before the soldiers, besought them, in the name of the blessed virgin, to spare their relation's life ; but the inhuman wretches tore him from their arms and dragged him to the foot of the strairs, together with the physician Vongad, where they held a kind of tribunal amongst themselves, and condemned them both to be put to the torture. One of the soldiers, who could write, drew up a form of accusation, and sentenced the two unfortunates to be cut in pieces ; a punishment inflicted in China and Tartary on parricides, and called the punishment of ten thousand slices. After having thus used Nariskin and Vongad, they exposed their heads, feet and hands, on the iron points of a balustrade.

While this party of the Strelitzes were thus glutting their fury in the sight of the princesses, the rest massacred every one which was obnoxious to them, or suspected by the princess Sophia.

This horrid tragedy concluded with proclaiming the two princes John and Peter, in June 1682, joint sovereigns, and associating their Sister Sophia with them, in the quality of co-regent ; who then publicly approved of all their outrages, gave them rewards, confiscated the estates of the proscribed, and bestowed them upon their murderers. She even permitted them to erect a monument, with the names of the persons they had murdered, as being traitors to their country : and to crown all, she published letters patent, thanking them for their zeal and fidelity.

C H A P. V

Administration of the princess SOFHIA.

Extraordinary quarrel about RELIGION.
A Conspiracy *.

SUCH were the steps by which the princess Sophia did in effect ascend the throne of Russia, though without being declared czarina, and such the examples that PETER the FIRST had before his eyes. Sophia enjoyed all the honours of a sovereign; her bust was on the public coin; she signed all dispatches, held the first place in council, and enjoyed a power without controul. She was possessed of a great share of understanding, and some wit, made verses in the Russian language, and both spoke and wrote extremely well. These talents were set off by the addition of an agreeable person, and fulfilled only by her ambition.

She procured a wife for her brother John, in the manner already described in several examples. A young lady, named Soltikoff, of the family with the noblemen of that name who had been assassinated by the seditious Strelitzes, was sent from the heart of Siberia, where her father commanded a fortress, to be presented to czar John at Moscow. Her beauty triumphed over all the intrigues of her rivals, and John was married to her in 1684. At every marriage of a czar, we seem to read the history of Ahasuerus, or that of Theodosius the younger.

* Extracted intirely from the memoirs communicated by the court of Petersburg.

In the midst of the rejoicings on account of this marriage, the Strelitzes raised a new insurrection, (and who would believe it?) on account of religion! of a particular tenet! Had they been mere soldiers, they would never have become controversialists, but they were also citizens of Moscow. Whosoever has, or assumes a right of speaking in an authoritative manner to the populace, may found a sect. This has been seen in all ages, and all parts of the world, especially since the passion of dogmatizing has become the instrument of ambition, and the terror of weak minds.

Russia had experienced some previous disturbances on occasion of a dispute, whether the sign of a cross was to be made with three fingers, or with two? One Abakum, who was all the priest, had set up some new tenets at Moscow, in regard to the holy Spirit; which, according to the scriptures, enlightened all the faithful; as likewise with respect to the equality of the primitive christians, and these words of Christ, "There shall be amongst you neither first nor last." Several citizens, and many of the Strelitzes, embraced the opinions of Abakum. One Raspop * was the chief of this party, which became considerable. The sectaries, at length, entered the cathedral, July 16 N S. 1682. where the patriarch and his clergy were officiating: drove them out of the church with stones, and seated themselves devoutly in their places, to receive the holy Spirit. They called the patriarch the "ravenous wolf in the sheepfold;" a title which all sects have liberally bestowed upon each other. The princess Sophia, and the two

* Raspop is not a proper name, in which sense M. de Voltaire takes it, but signifies a degraded priest.

czars, were immediately made acquainted with these disturbances ; and the other Strelitzes, who were staunch to the good old cause, were given to understand, that the czars and the church were in danger. Upon this the Strelitzes and the burghers of the patriarchal party attacked the Abakumits ; but a stop was put to the carnage, by publishing a convocation of a council, which was immediately assembled in a hall of the palace. This took up very little time, for they obliged every priest they met to attend. The patriarch, and a bishop, disputed against Raspop ; but at the second sylogism, they began to throw stones at one another. The council ended with ordering Raspop, and some of his faithful disciples, to have their heads struck off ; and the sentence was executed by the sole order of the three sovereigns, Sophia, John, and Peter.

During these troubles, there was a knez, named Chowanskoi, who, having been instrumental in raising the princess Sophia to the dignity she then held, wanted, as a reward for his services, to have a share in the administration. It may be supposed, that he found Sophia not so grateful as he could wish ; upon which he espoused the cause of religion, and the persecuted Raspopians, and stirred up a party among the Strelitzes and the people, in defence of the cause of God.

This conspiracy proved a more serious affair than the enthusiastic riot of Raspop. An ambitious hypocrite always carries things further than a simple fanatic. Chowanskoi aimed at no less than the imperial dignity ; and to rid himself of all cause of fear, he resolved to murder the two czars, Sophia, the other princesses, and every one who was attached to the imperial family. The czars

and the princesses were obliged to retire to the monastery of the Holy Trinity, within twelve leagues of Moscow. This was, at the same time a convent, a palace, and a fortress, like mount Cassino, Corby, Fulda, Kempten, and several others belonging to the Latin church. This monastery of the Trinity belongs to the monks of St. Basil. It is surrounded by deep ditches, and ramparts of brick, on which is planted a numerous artillery. The monks are possessed of all the country round for four leagues. The imperial family were in full safety there, but more on account of the strength, than the sanctity of the place. Here Sophia treated with the rebel knez ; and having decoyed him half way, caused his head to be struck off, together with those of one of his sons, and thirty seven Strelitzes who accompanied him *.

The body of Strelitzes, upon this news, fly to arms, and march to attack the convent of Trinity, threatening to destroy every thing that come in their way. The imperial family stood upon their defence ; the boyars arm their vassals, all the gentlemen flocked in, and a bloody civil war seemed on the point of beginning. The patriarch somewhat pacified the Strelitzes, who began to be intimidated with the number of troops that were marching towards them on all sides : in short, their fury was changed into fear, and their fear into the most abject submission ; a change common to the multitude. Three thousand seven hundred of this corps, followed by their wives and children, with ropes tied about their necks, went in procession to the convent of the Trinity, which three days before they had threatened to burn to the ground. In this condition, these unhappy

wretches present themselves before the gate of the convent, two by two, one carrying a block, and another an ax; and prostrating themselves on the ground, waited for their sentence. They were pardoned upon their submission, and returned back to Moscow, blessing their sovereigns; and still disposed, though unknown to themselves, to commit the same crime upon the very first opportunity.

These commotions being subsided, the state resumed an exterior of tranquillity; but Sophia still remained possessed of the chief authority, leaving John to his incapacity, and keeping Peter in the subjection of a ward. In order to strengthen her power, she shared it with prince Basil Galitzin, whom she created generalissimo, minister of state, and lord-keeper. Galitzin was in every respect superior to any person in that distracted court: he was polite, magnificent, full of great designs, more learned than any of his countrymen, as having received a much better education, and was even master of the Latin tongue, which was, at that time, almost entirely unknown in Russia. He was of an active and indefatigable spirit, had a genius superior to the times he lived in, and capable, had he had leisure and power, as he had inclination, to have changed the face of things in Russia. This is the elogium given of him by La Neuville, at that time the Polish envoy in Russia; and the encomiums of foreigners are seldom to be suspected.

This minister bridled the insolence of the Strelitzes, by distributing the most mutinous of that body, among the several regiments in the Ukraine, in Casan, and Siberia. It was under his administration, that the Poles, long the rivals of Russia,

gave up, in 1686, all pretensions to the large provinces of Smolensko and the Ukraine. He was the first who sent an embassy to France, in 1687; a country, which had for upwards of twenty years been in the zenith of its glory, by the conquests, new establishments, and the magnificence of Lewis XIV. and especially by the improvement of the arts, without which there can be only external grandeur, but no solid glory. France had not then entered into any correspondence with Russia, or rather was unacquainted with that empire; and the academy of inscriptions ordered a medal to be struck to commemorate this embassy, as if it had come from the most distant part of the Indies; but notwithstanding all this, the ambassador Dolgorouski miscarried in his negotiation, and even suffered some gross affronts on account of the behaviour of his domestics, whose mistakes it would have been better to have overlooked; but the court of Lewis XIV. could not then foresee, that France and Russia would one day reckon among the number of their advantages, that of being cemented by the closest union.

Russia was now quiet at home, but she was still pent up on the side of Sweden, though enlarged towards Poland, her new ally, in continual alarms on the side of Crim Tartary, and at variance with China in regard to the frontiers.

The most intolerable circumstance for their empire and which plainly shewed, that it had not yet attained to a vigorous and regular administration was, that the Khan of the Crim Tartars exacted an annual tribute of 6000 rubles, in the nature of that which the Turk had imposed on the Poles.

Crim Tartary is the ancient Taurica Chersonesus, formerly so famous by the commerce of the

Greeks, and still more by their fables, a fruitful but barbarous country. It took its name of Crimea or Crim, from the title of its first Khans, who took this name before the conquests of the sons of Gengis Khan. To free the country from this yoke and wipe off the disgrace of such a tribute, the prime minister, Galitzin, marched in person into Crim Tartary, at the head of a numerous army*. These armies are not to be compared to the present troops; they had no discipline: there was hardly one regiment completely armed; they had no uniform cloathing, no regularity: their men indeed were inured to hard labour and a scarcity of provisions, but then they carried with them such a prodigious quantity of baggage, as far exceeded any thing of the kind of our camps, where the greatest luxury prevails. Their vast numbers of waggons for carrying ammunition and provisions, in an uninhabitable and desert country, greatly retarded the expedition against Crim Tartary. The army found itself in the midst of the vast deserts on the river Samara, unprovided with magazines. Here Galitzin did, what, in my opinion, was never done any where else: he employed 30,000 men in building a town on the banks of the Samara, to serve as a place for magazines in the ensuing campaign: it was begun in one year, and finished in the third month of the following; the houses indeed were all of wood except two, which were brick; the ramparts were of turf, but well lined with artillery; and the whole place was in a tolerable state of defence.

This was all that was done of any consequence in this ruinous expedition. In the mean while, Sophia continued to govern in Moscow, while

* 1687, 1688.

John had only the name of czar; and Peter, now at the age of seventeen, had already the courage to aim at real sovereignty. La Neuville, the Polish enovy, then resident at Moscow, and who was eye witness to all that passed, pretends that Sophia and Galitzin had engaged the new chief of the Strelitzes, to sacrifice to them their young czar: it appears at least, that 600 of these Strelitzes, were to have made themselves masters of his person. The private memoirs, which have been entrusted to my perusal, by the court of Russia, affirm, that a scene had actually been laid to murder Peter the First; the blow was on the point of being struck, and Russia for ever deprived of the new existence she has since received. The czar was once more obliged to take refuge in the convent of the Trinity, the usual asylum of the court when threatened by the soldiers. There he assembled the boyars of his party, raised a body of forces, treats with the captain of the Strelitzes, and called in the assistance of certain Germans, who had been long settled in Moscow, and were all attached to his person, from his having already shewn himself the encourager of strangers. Sophia and John, who continued at Moscow used every means to engage the Strelitzes, to remain firm to their interests; but the cause of young Peter, who loudly complained of an attempt meditated against himself and his mother, prevailed over that of the princets, and of a czar, whose very aspect alienated all hearts. All the accomplices were punished with a severity to which that country was as much accustomed, as to the crimes that occasioned it. Some were beheaded, after undergoing the punishment of the knout or battocks. The chief of the Strelitzes was put to death in the same manner, and several

other suspected persons had their tongues cut out. Prince Galitzin escaped with his life, through the intercession of one of his relations, who was a favourite of czar Peter; but he was stripped of all his riches, which were immense, and banished to a place in the neighbourhood of Archangel. La Neuville, who was present at the whole of this catastrophe, relates, that the sentence pronounced upon Galitzin, was in these terms "Thou art commanded, by the most clement czar, to repair to Karga, a town under the Pole, and there to continue the remainder of thy days. His majesty, out of his extreme goodness, allows thee three pence per day for thy subsistence."

There is no town under the Pole. Karga is in the 62d degree of latitude, and only six degrees and an half further north than Moscow. Whoever pronounced this sentence, must have been a very bad geographer. La Neuville was probably imposed upon by a false account.

At length *, the Princess Sophia was once more sent back to her monastery at Moscow, after having so long held the reins of government; and this revolution proved, to a woman of her disposition, a sufficient punishment.

From this instant Peter began to reign in reality; his brother John having no other share in the government, but that of seeing his name to all public acts. He led a retired life, and died in 1696.

* 1689.

C H A P. VI.

The REIGN of PETER the FIRST.

Beginning of the Grand Reformation.

PETER the Great was tall, genteel, well-made, with a noble aspect, piercing eyes, and a robust constitution, fitted for all kinds of hardship and bodily exercise. He had a sound understanding, which is the basis of all real abilities; and to this was joined an active disposition, which prompted him to undertake and execute the greatest things. His education was far from being worthy of his genius. The Princess Sophia was in a peculiar manner, interested to let him remain in ignorance, and to indulge himself in those excesses which youth, idleness, custom, and the high rank he held, made but too allowable. Nevertheless, he had been lately married *, like others of his predecessors, to one of his own subjects, the daughter of colonel Lapuchin; but as he was young, and for some time enjoyed none of the prerogatives of the crown, but that of indulging his pleasures without restraint, the ties of wedlock were not always sufficient to keep him within just bounds. The pleasures of the table, in which he indulged himself rather too freely, with foreigners who had been invited to Moscow by prince Galitzin, seemed not to presage that he would one day become the reformer of his country; however, in spite of bad examples, and even the allurements of pleasures, he applied himself to the arts of war and govern-

* In June 1689.

ment, and which even then shewed, that he had the seeds of greatness in him.

It was still less expected, that a prince, who was subject to such a constitutional dread of water as to subject him to cold sweats, and even convulsions, when he was obliged to cross a small river or a brook, should become one of the best seamen in all the north. In order to get the better of nature he began by jumping into the water, notwithstanding the horror that he felt at it, till at length this aversion was changed into a fondness for that element *

He often blushed at the ignorance in which he had been brought up. He learned, almost of himself, without the help of a master, a sufficient stock of High and Low Dutch, to be able to write and explain himself tolerably well in both those languages. The Germans and Dutch appeared to him as the most civilized nations, because the former had already erected in Moscow, some of those arts and manufactures which he was desirous of seeing established in his empire; and the latter excelled in the art of navigation, which he

* We find in the memoirs of count Strahlemburg, a Swedish officer, who was taken prisoner at the battle of Poltowa and continued many years at the court of czar Peter, the following account of the true cause of this extraordinary kind of hydrophobia. When Peter was about five years of age his mother took him with her in a coach for an airing, and having to pass a dam, where there was a great fall of water, the child who was then sleeping in his nurse's lap, was so terrified by the rushing of the water, (the noise of which awaked him suddenly out of his sleep) that he was seized with a violent fever and after his recovery, he retained such a dread of that element, that he could not bear the sight even of any standing water, much less to hear a running stream.

already began to look upon as the most necessary of all others.

Such were the dispositions which Peter cherished, notwithstanding the follies of his youth. At the same time he found himself disturbed by factions at home, had the turbulent spirit of the Strelitzes to keep under, and an almost uninterrupted war to manage against the Crim Tartars. For though hostilities had been suspended in 1689 by a truce, it had no long continuance.

During this interval, Peter became confirmed in his design of introducing the arts into his country.

His father Alexis had, in his life-time, entertained the same views, but he wanted leisure, and a favourable opportunity to carry them into execution. He transmitted his genius to his son, who was more clear sighted, more vigorous, and more unshaken by difficulties and obstacles.

Alexis had been at a great expence in sending for Bothler *, a ship-builder and sea captain from Holland, together with a number of carpenters and sailors. These built a large frigate and a yacht upon the Wolga, which they navigated down that river to Astracan, where they were to be employed in building more vessels, for carrying on an advantageous trade with Persia by the Caspian sea. Just at this time the revolt of Stenko Rasin broke out; and this rebel destroyed these two vessels, which he ought to have preserved for his own sake, and murdered the captains. The rest of the crew fled into Persia, from whence they got to some settlements belonging to the Dutch East India Company. A master-builder, who was a good

* Memoirs of Petersburg and Moscow.

Ship wright, staid behind in Russia, where he lived a long time in obscurity.

One day, Peter taking a walk at Ishmaelof, a summer-palace built by his grand-fathers, he perceived, among several other rarities, an old English shallop, which had lain entirely neglected: upon which he asked Timmerman, a German, and his mathematical teacher, how came that little boat to be of so different a construction from any he had seen on the Moska? Timmerman replied, that it was made to go with sails and oars. The young prince wanted instantly to make a trial of it; but it was first to be repaired and rigged. Brant, the ship-builder above mentioned, was by accident found out at Miscow, where he lived retired; he soon put the boat in order, and worked her upon the river Yauza, which washes the suburbs of the town.

Peter caused his boat to be removed to a great lake, in the neighbourhood of the convent of the Trinity; he likewise made Brant build two more frigates, and three yachts, and piloted them himself. A considerable time afterwards, viz in 1694, he made a journey to Archangel, and having ordered a small vessel to be built in that port by the same Brant, he embarked therein on the Frozen sea, which no sovereign beside himself had ever beheld. On this occasion, he was escorted by a Dutch man of war, under the command of Captain Jolson, and attended by all the merchant vessels then in the port of Archangel. He had already learned the manner of working a ship; and notwithstanding the pains his courtiers took to imitate their master, he was the only one who made a proficiency in it.

He found it no less difficult to raise a well disciplined body of land forces on whom he could depend, than to establish a navy. His first essay on navigation, on a lake, previous to his journey to Archangel, was looked upon only as the amusements of a young prince of genius; and his first attempt to form a body of disciplined troops, likewise, appeared as nothing more than that of diversion. This happened during the regency of the princess Sophia; and had he been suspected of meaning any thing by this amusement, it might have been attended with fatal consequences to him.

He placed his confidence in a foreigner, the celebrated Le Fort of a noble and ancient family in Piedmont, transplanted near two centuries ago to Geneva, where they have filled the most considerable posts in the state. He was intended to have been brought up to trade, to which that town is indebted for the figure it now makes, having formerly been known only as the seat of religious controversies.

But his genius, which prompted him to the greatest undertakings, engaged him to quit his father's house at the age of fourteen; and he served four years in quality of a cadet in the citadel of Marseilles; from thence he went to Holland, where he served some time as a volunteer, and was wounded at the siege of Grave, a strong fortified town on the Meuse, which the prince of Orange, afterwards king of England, retook from Lewis XIV. in 1694. After this, led by hopes of preferment, wherever he could find it, he embarked with a German colonel, named Verstin, who had obtained a commission from Peter's father, the czar Alexis, to raise soldiers in the Netherlands, and bring them to Archangel. But when he arrived

at that port, after a most fatiguing and dangerous navigation, the czar Alexis was no more; the government was changed, and Russia in confusion. The governor of Archangel suffered Verstin, Le Fort, and his whole troop, to remain a long time, in the utmost poverty and distress, and even threatened to send them into the extremity of Siberia; upon which every man shifted for himself. Le Fort, in want of every thing, repaired to Moscow, where he waited upon the Danish resident, named de Horn, who made him his secretary: there he learned the Russian language, and some time afterwards found means to be introduced to czar Peter; the elder brother Iwan, not being a person for his purpose. Peter was taken with him, and immediately gave him a company of foot. Le Fort did not understand much of the military service, he knew but little of letters, not having studied any particular art or science; but he had seen a great deal, and had a talent of making the most of what he saw. Like the czar, he owed every thing to his own genius; he understood the German and Dutch languages, which Peter was learning, as those of two nations that might be of service in his designs. Every thing conspired to make him agreeable to Peter, to whom he strictly attached himself. From being the companion of his pleasures, he became his favourite, and confirmed himself in that station by his abilities. The czar made him his confident in the most dangerous design that a prince of that country could possibly form, namely, that of putting himself in a condition to be able one day to break the seditious and barbarous body of forces called the Strelitzes. It had cost the great Sultan Osman his life for attempting to disband the Janis-

faries. Peter, young as he was, went to work in a much abler way than Osman.

He began with forming, at his country-seat at Preobrazinski, a company of fifty of his youngest domestics ; and some young gentlemen, the sons of boyars, were chosen for their officers : but in order to teach these young noblemen a subordination, to which they were wholly unaccustomed, he made them pass through all the different military degrees, and himself set them the example, by serving first as a drum, then as a private soldier, a serjeant, and a lieutenant of the company. Nothing was ever more extraordinary, nor more useful than this conduct. The Russians had hitherto made war in the same manner as our ancestors at the time of the feudal tenures, when the unexperienced nobles took the field at the head of their vassals, undisciplined, and ill-armed : a barbarous method, sufficient indeed to act against the like armies, but of no use against regular troops.

This company, which was formed wholly by Peter himself, soon increased in numbers, and became afterwards the regiment of Preobrazinski guards. Another regiment, formed on the same plan, became in time the regiment of Semeniousky guards.

The czar had already a regiment of five thousand men that could be depended upon, trained by general Gordon, a Scotchman, and composed almost entirely of foreigners. Le Fort, who had born arms but a short time, but whose capacity was equal to every thing, undertook to raise a regiment of 12,000 men, which he effected : five colonels were appointed to serve under him, and he saw himself on a sudden general of this little

army, which had been raised, as much to oppose the Strelitzes, as the enemies of the state.

One thing worthy of being remarked *, and which fully confutes the hasty error of those who pretend, that France lost very few of its inhabitants by the revocation of the edict of Nantz, is, that one-third of his army, which was only called a regiment, consisted of French refugees. Le Fort disciplined his new troops, as if he had been all his lifetime a soldier.

Peter was desirous of seeing one of those images of war, the mock-fights, which had been lately introduced in times of peace: a fort was erected, which was to be attacked by one part of his new troops, and defended by the other. The difference between this fight and others of the like nature, was, that instead of a sham engagement, there was a real one, in which some of his men were slain, and a great many wounded. Le Fort, who commanded the attack, received a considerable wound. These bloody sports were intended to initiate the young troops into the service of the field; but it required much labour, and even some degree of sufferings, to compafs this end.

These warlike amusements did not take off the czar's attention to his naval project. As he had made Le Fort a general by land, notwithstanding his having never borne a command; he now made him admiral, though he had never had the direction of a ship, but he knew him deserving both of the one and the other. It is true, that he was an admiral without a fleet, and a general with only his regiment for an army.

• General Le Fort's MSS.



By degrees the czar reformed that great abuse in the army, viz. the independence of the boyars, who, in time of war, used to bring into the field a multitude of their vassals and peasants: this was exactly the ancient government of the Franks, Huns, Goths, and Vandals, who indeed subdued the Roman empire in its state of decline, but would have been total'y destroyed, had they had the war-like disciplined legions of ancient Rome to encounter, or such armies as are now brought into the field.

Admiral Le Fort was not long, however, before he had something more than an empty title. He employed some Dutchmen and Venetians in building a number of long-boats, and also two ships of about thirty guns each, at the mouth of the Woronitz, which falls into the Tanais, or Don: these vessels were to fall down the river, and keep in awe the Crim Tartars, with whom hostilities had been renewed.

The czar was now to determine in 1689, against which of the following powers he would declare war, whether against the Turks, the Swedes, or the Chinese. But here it will be proper to premise on what terms he then stood with China, and which was the first treaty of peace concluded by that nation.

C H A P. VII.

Congress and Treaty with the CHINESE*.

WE must set out by forming a proper idea of the limits of the Chinese and Russian empires at this period. When we leave Siberia, properly so called, and also far behind us to the south, an hundred hordes of Tartars, with white and black Calmucks, and Mahometan and pagan Moguls, we come to the 130th degree of longitude, and the 52d of latitude, upon the river Amur. To the northward is a great chain of mountains, that stretches as far as the Frozen sea, beyond the polar circle. This river, which runs upwards of 500 leagues, through Siberia and Chinese Tartary, falls after many windings into the sea of Kamtschatka. It is affirmed for a truth, that at its mouth, which opens with this sea, there is sometimes caught a monstrous fish, much larger than the hippopotamus of the Nile, and that the tooth thereof is the finest ivory. It is further pretended that this ivory was formerly an object of trade; that they used to convey it through Siberia which is the reason why several pieces of it are still found under ground in that country. This is the most probable account of that fossil ivory, of which we have elsewhere spoken; for it appears highly chimerical to pretend, that there were formerly elephants in Siberia.

* Extracted from memoirs sent from China: also from those of Petersburg, and from letters published in Du Halde's history of China.

The Amur is likewise called the Black river by the Mantchou Tartars, and the Dragon river by the Chinese.

It was in these countries, so long unknown, that the Russians and Chinese contested the limits of their empires*. The Russians had some forts on the river Amur, about three hundred leagues from the great wall. Many hostilities had arisen between these two nations on account of these forts: at length both began to understand their interests better; the emperor Camhi preferred peace and commerce to an unprofitable war, and sent several ambassadors to Niptchou, one of those settlements. The ambassadors had five thousand men in their retinue, including their escort. This was Asiatic pomp; but what is very remarkable is, that there was not an example in the annals of the empire, of an embassy being sent to another potentate; and what is still more singular, that the Chinese had never concluded a treaty of peace since the foundation of their monarchy. Though twice conquered by the Tartars, who attacked and subjected them, they never made war upon any people, excepting a few hordes that were quickly subdued; or as quickly left to themselves without any treaty. So that this nation, so renowned for morality, knew nothing of what we call the "Law of Nations;" that is to say, of those vague rules of war and peace, of the privileges of foreign ministers, of the formalities of treaties, nor of the obligations resulting from thence, nor of the disputes concerning precedence and point of honour.

But in what language were the Chinese to negotiate with the Russians, in the midst of deserts?

* Memoirs of the Jesuits Pereira and Gerbillon.

This difficulty was removed by two Jesuits, the one a Portuguese, named Pereira, the other a Frenchman, whose name was Gerbillon. They set out from Pekin with the Chinese ambassadors, and were themselves the real negotiators. They conferred in Latin with a German belonging to the Russian embassy, who understood this language. The chief of that embassy was Golowin, governor of Siberia, who displayed a greater magnificence than the Chinese themselves, and there by gave a high idea of the Russian empire, to a people who thought themselves the only powerful nation under the sun.

The two jesuits settled the limits of both empires, at the river Kerbechi, near the spot where the treaty was concluded. All the country, to the southward of this line of partition, was adjudged to the Chinese and the north to the Russians, who only lost a small fort which was found to have been built beyond the limits: a peace was agreed to, and after some few alterations, both parties swore to observe it, in the name of the same God; and in these terms, "If any of us shall entertain the least thought of kindling a new the flames of war, we beseech the supreme Lord of all things, and who knows all hearts, to punish the traitor with sudden death."

From this form of treaty, used alike by Chinese and Christians, we may infer two important truths: the first, that the Chinse government is neither atheistical nor idolatrous, as has been so frequently and falsely charged upon it, by contradictory imputations. The second, that all nations, who cultivate the gift of reason and understanding, do, in effect, acknowledge the same God, notwithstanding

ing the particular deviations of that reason, thro' the want of being properly instructed.

This treaty was drawn up in Latin, and two copies were made of it. The Russian ambassadors set their names first to the copy that remained in their possession, and the Chinese also signed their's the first, agreeable to the custom observed by European nations, when two equal powers conclude a treaty with each other. On this occasion was observed another custom belonging to the Asiatic nations, and which was, indeed, that of the earliest ages. The treaty was engraved on two large marble pillars, erected on the spot, to determine the boundaries of the two empires.

Three years after this, the czar sent Isbrand Ides, a Dane, his ambassador to China; and the commerce he then established between the two nations, continued with advantage to each, till the rupture between them in the year 1722; but since this short interruption, it has been revived with redoubled vigour.

C H A P. VIII.

Expedition to the PALUS MÆOTIS. Conquest of ASOPH.

The czar sends young gentlemen into foreign countries for improvement.

IT was not so easy to have peace with the Turks, and indeed the time seemed come for the Russians to rise upon their ruins. The republic of Venice, that had long groaned under their yoke, began now to rouse itself. The Doge Morosini, the same who had surrendered Candy to the Turks,

afterwards took from them the Peloponnesus, which conquest got him the title of *Peloponnesian*, an honour which revived the memory of the Roman republic. Leopold, emperor of Germany, had proved successful against the Ottoman power in Hungary: and the Poles made shift to check the incursions of the Crim Tartars.

Peter took advantage of these circumstances, to discipline his troops, and to procure himself the empire of the Black Sea. General Gordon marched along the Tanais, towards Asoph, with his numerous regiment of 4000 men, followed by general Le Fort, with his regiment of 12,000; by a body of Strlitzes, under the command of Scheremetow and Schein, natives of Prussia; by a body of Cossacks and by a large train of artillery: in a word, every thing was ready for this expedition *.

This grand army began its march under the command of marshal Sceremetow †, in the beginning of the summer of 1695, to attack the town of Asoph at the mouth of the Tanais, and at the extremity of the Palus Maeotis, now called the Zabac sea. The czar himself was with the army, but only in quality of a volunteer, being determined to learn, before he took upon him to command. During their march, they stormed two forts which the Turks had built on the banks of the river.

This expedition was attended with some considerable difficulties. The place was well fortified, and defended by a numerous garrison. A number of long-boats, resembling the Turkish saicks, and built by Venetians, with two small Dutch ships of war, that were to sail out of the Woronitz, could

* 1694.

† Or Scheremetoff.

not be got ready soon enough to enter the sea of Azoph. All beginnings meet with obstacles. The Russians had never yet made a regular siege; and the first attempt did not meet with all the success that could be desired.

One Jacob, a native of Dantzick, had the direction of the artillery, under the command of general Schein; for as yet they had none but foreign officers belonging to the train, and none but foreign engineers and pilots. This Jacob had been condemned to the bastinade, or *knout*, by Schein, the Prussian general. At that time rigorous discipline was thought to be the only method of strengthening command; and the Russians quietly submitted to it notwithstanding their natural bent to sedition; and after the punishment, did their duty as usual. But the Dane thought in a different manner, and resolved to be revenged for the treatment he had received, and thereupon nailed up the cannon, deserted to the Turks, turned Mahometan, and defended Azoph, with great success against his former masters. This instance shews, that the lenity, which is now practised in Russia, is much preferable to the former severities; and is better calculated to retain those in their duty, who, by a good education, have a proper sense of honour. It was absolutely necessary, at that time, to use the utmost rigour towards the common people; but since their manners have been changed, the empress Elizabeth has compleated, by clemency, the work her father begun, by the authority of the laws. This lenity has even been carried, by this princess to a degree unparalleled in the history of any nation. She has promised, that during her reign, no person shall be punished with death, and she has kept her word. She is the first

sovereign who ever shewed so much regard for the lives of men. By an institution, equally prudent and humane, malefactors are now condemned to serve in the mines, and other public works; by which means their very punishments prove of service to the state. In other countries, they know only how to put a criminal to death, with all the apparatus of execution, without being able to prevent the perpetration of crimes. The apprehension of death makes, perhaps, less impression on those miscreants, who are for the most part bred up in idleness, than the fear of punishment and hard labour, renewed every day.

To return to the siege of Asoph, which place was now defended by the same person who had before directed the attacks against it; the Russians, in vain, attempted to take it by storm; and after losing a great number of men were obliged to raise the siege.

Perseverance in his undertakings, was the distinguishing character of Peter the Great. In the spring of 1696, he brought a still more considerable army before Asoph. About this time died czar John, his brother, who, though he had not, while living, been the least curb to Peter's authority, having enjoyed only the bare title of czar, yet he had been some restraint upon him in regard to appearances. The money, which had been appropriated to the support of John's dignity and household, was now applied to the maintainance of the army. This proved no small help to a government, whose revenues were not near so great as they are at present. Peter wrote to the emperor Leopold, to the states general, and to the elector of Brandenburg, to obtain engineers, gunners, and seamen. He likewise took some Calmucks into

his pay, whose light horse were very useful against the Crim Tartars.

The most agreeable of the czar's successes, was that of his little fleet, which was at length completed and well commanded. It defeated the Turkish saicks sent from Constantinople, and took some of them. The siege was carried on regularly by trenches, but not altogether in our method; the trenches being three times deeper than ours, with parapets as high as ramparts. At length the garrison surrendered the 28th of July, N S * without being allowed the honour of war, or to carry out with them either arms or ammunition: they were likewise obliged to deliver up the renegado Jacob to the conquerors.

The czar immediately set about fortifying Asoph, built strong forts to protect it, and made a harbour capable of holding large vessels with a design to make himself master of the Streights of Caffa, or the Cimmerian Bosphorus, which commands the entrance into the Euxine or Black Sea; places famous in antient times, by the naval armaments of Mithridates. He left thirty-two armed saicks befor Asoph †, and made all the necessary preparations for fitting out a fleet against the Turks, to consist of nine ships of sixty guns, and of forty one, from thirty to fifty. He obliged his principal nobles, and the richer merchants, to contribute towards his armament; and thinking that the estates of the clergy ought to help towards the common cause, he obliged the patriarch the bishops, and the principal clergy, to pay down a sum of ready money to forward this expedition in honour of their country, and the advantage of

the christian faith. The Cossacks were employed in building a number of those light boats in use among them, and which were excellent for the purpose of cruizing on the coast of Crim Tartary. The Ottoman empire was alarmed at this powerful armament : the first that had ever been attempted on the Maeotis. The czar's scheme was to drive the Turks and the Tartars for ever out of the Tauric Chersonesus, and afterwards to establish a free and easy commerce with Persia through Georgia. This is the very trade which the Greeks formerly carried on to Colchos, and to this peninsula of Crim Tartary, which Peter now seemed on the point of conquering.

Having subdued the Turks and the Tartars, he was willing to accustom his people to splendid shews, as well as to military labour. He made his army to enter into Moscow, under triumphal arches, in the midst of superb fire-works, and every thing that could add to the lustre of the festival. The soldiers who had fought on board the Venetian saicks against the Turks, and who were a distinct corps of themselves, marched first. Marshal Scheremetow, the Generals Gordon and Schein, admiral Le Fort, and the other general officers, all took the precedence of the monarch in this procession, who declared he had no rank in the army, being desirous to convince the nobility, by his example, that the only way to acquire military pre-eminence, was to deserve it.

This triumphal entry seemed somewhat a kin to those of the ancient Romans, in which the conquerors were wont to expose the prisoners they had taken to public view, and sometimes put them to death : in like manner the slaves, taken in this expedition, followed the army ; and the deserters

Jacob, who had betrayed them, was drawn in an open cart, in which was a gibbet, to which his body was fastened after he had been broke upon the wheel.

On this occasion was struck the first medal in Russia, with this remarkable legend, in the language of the country, "PETER the FIRST, august emperor of Muscovy." On the reverse was the city of Asoph, with these words: "Victorious by Fire and Water."

Peter felt a sensible concern in the midst of all these successes, that his ships and gallies in the sea of Asoph, had been built entirely by the hands of foreigners: and wished as earnestly to have a harbour in the Baltic, as upon the Euxine Sea.

Accordingly, in the month of March 1677, he sent threescore young Russians of Le Fort's regiment, into Italy, most of them to Venice, and the rest to Leghorn, to instruct themselves in the naval art, and the manner of constructing gallies. He likewise sent forty others into Holland *, to learn the method of building and working large ships; and others likewise into Germany, to serve in the land forces, and instruct themselves in the military discipline of that nation. At length he took a resolution to absent himself for a few years from his own dominions, in order to learn how to govern them the better. He had an irresistible inclination to improve himself by his own observation and practice in the knowlege of naval affairs, and of the several arts which he was so desirous to establish in his own country. He proposed to travel *incognito* thro' Denmark, Brandenburg, Holland, Vienna, Venice and Rome. France and Spain were the only countries he did not take

* General Le Fort's MSS.

into his plan ; Spain, because the arts he was in quest of, were too much neglected there ; and France, because in that kingdom they reigned with too much ostentation, and that the parade and state of Lewis XIV which had disgusted so many crowned heads, ill agreed with the private manner in which he proposed to travel. Moreover he was in alliance with most of the powers, whose dominions he intended to visit, except those of France and Rome. He likewise remembered, with some degree of resentment, the little respect shewn by Lewis XIV to his embassy in 1687, which had proved more famous than successful ; and lastly, he already began to espouse the cause of Augustus, elector of Saxony, with whom the prince of Conti had lately entered into a competition for the crown of Poland.

C H A P. IX.

TRAVELS OF PETER the GREAT.

HAVING thus determined to visit the several countries and courts above mentioned in a private character, he put himself into the retinue of three ambassadors *, in the same manner as he had before mingled in the train of his generals at his triumphant entry into Moscow.

The three ambassadors were †, general Le Fort, the boyar Alexis Gollowin, commissary general of war, and governor of Siberia, the same who signed the perpetual treaty of peace with the plenipotentiaries of China, on the frontiers of that empire ;

* 1697. † Memoirs of Petersburg, and memoirs of Le Fort.

and Wonitzin, diak, or secretary of state, who had been long employed in foreign courts. Four principal secretaries twelve gentlemen, two pages for each ambassador, a company of fifty guards, with their officers, all of the regiment of Preobrazinski, composed the chief retinue of this embassy, which consisted in the whole of two hundred persons; and the czar, reserving to himself only one valet de chambre a servant in livery, and a dwarf, mingled with the crowd. It was a thing unparalleled in history, for a king of five and twenty years of age, to quit his dominions, in order to learn the art of governing. His victory over the Turks and Tartars, the splendour of his triumphant entry into Moscow, the number of foreign troops attached to his service, the death of his brother John, his copartner in the empire, and the confinement of the princess Sophia to a cloister, and above all the universal respect shewn to his person, seemed to assure him the tranquillity of his kingdom during his absence. He entrusted the regency in the hands of the boyar Strechnef, and the knez or prince Romadonowski, who were to deliberate with the rest of the boyars in cases of importance.

Two troops raised by general Gordon remained behind in Moscow, to keep every thing quiet in that capital. Those Strelitzes, who were thought like to create a disturbance, were distributed in the frontiers of Crim Tartary, to preserve the conquest of Afoph, and to check the incursions of the Tartars. Having provided against every incident, he gave a free scope to his passion and desire of improvement.

As this journey proved the cause, or at least the pretext, of the bloody war, which so long traversed, but in the end promoted, all the designs of the

czar; which drove Augustus king of Poland from the throne; placed that crown on the head of Stanislaus, and then stript him of it; which made Charles XII. king of Sweden, the first of conquerors for nine years, and the most unfortunate of kings for nine more; it is necessary in order to enter into a detail of these events, to take a view of the state of Europe at that time.

Sultan Mustapha II. was seated on the Ottoman throne; the weakness of whose administration would not permit him to make any great efforts, either against Leopold, emperor of Germany, whose arms were successful in Hungary; nor against the czar, who had lately taken Azoph from him, and threatened to make himself master of the Euxine sea; nor even against the Venetians, who had made themselves masters of all the Peloponnesus.

John Sobieski, king of Poland, for ever famous by the victory of Chocksim, and the deliverance of Vienna, died the 17th of June 1696, and the possession of that crown was in dispute between Augustus elector of Saxony, who obtained it, and Armand prince of Conti, who had only the honour of being elected.

Sweden had lately lost, but without regret, Charles XI. her sovereign *, who was the first king, who had ever been really absolute in that country, and who was the father of a prince still more so, and with whom all despotic power ceased. He left the crown to his son Charles XII. a youth of only fifteen years of age. This was in all appearance a conjuncture the most favourable for the czar's design; he had it in his power to extend his dominions on the gulph of Finland, and on the

* 1697.

sive of Livonia. But he did not think it enough to harass the Turks on the Black Sea; the settlements on the Palus Maeotis, and the borders of the Caspian sea, were not sufficient to answer his schemes of navigation, commerce and power. Besides, glory, which is the darling object of every reformer, was to be found neither in Persia nor in Turkey, but in our parts of Europe, where great talents are rendered immortal. In a word, Peter did not aim at introducing either the Persian or Turkish manners among his subjects.

Germany, then at war both with the Turks and with the French, and united with Spain, England, and Holland, against the single power of Lewis XIV. was on the point of concluding peace; and the plenipotentiaries were already met at the castle of Ryswick, in the neighbourhood of the Hague.

It was during this situation of affairs, that Peter and his ambassadors began their journey in the month of April 1697, by the way of Great Novgorod: from thence they travelled through Estonia and Livonia, provinces formerly disputed by the Russians, Swedes, and Poles, and which the Swedes at last acquired by superiority of arms.

The fertility of Livonia, and the situation of its capital Riga, were temptations to the czar, to possess himself of that country. He expressed a curiosity to see the fortifications of the citadel. But Count D'Alberg, governor of Riga, taking umbrage at this request, refused him the satisfaction he desired, and affected to treat the embassy with contempt. This behaviour did not at all contribute to cool the inclination the czar might have, to make himself one day master of those provinces.

From Livonia they proceeded to Brandenburg Prussia, part of which had been inhabited by the

ancient Vandals ; Polish Prussia had been included in European Salmatia. Brandenburg Prussia was a poor country, and badly peopled ; but its elector, who afterwards took the name of king, displayed a magnificence on this occasion, equally new and destructive to his dominions. He piqued himself upon receiving this embassy in his city of Konigsberg, with all the pomp of royalty. The most sumptuous presents were made on both sides. The contrast between the French dress, which the court of Berlin affected, and the long Asiatic robes of the Russians, with their caps buttoned up with pearls and diamonds, and their scimitars hanging at their belts, produced a singular effect. The czar was dressed after the German fashion. The prince of Georgia, who accompanied him, was clad in a Persian habit, which displayed a different magnificence. This is the same who was taken prisoner afterwards at the battle of Narva.

Peter despised all this ostentation : it was to have been wished, that he had shewn an equal contempt for the pleasures of the table, in which the Germans, at that time, placed their chiefest glory. It was at one of these entertainments *, then too much in fashion, and which are alike fatal to health and morality, that he drew his sword upon his favourite Le Fort ; but he expressed as much contrition for this sudden fall of passion, as Alexander did for the murder of Clytus. He asked pardon of Le Fort, saying, that he wanted to reform his subjects, and could not yet reform himself. General Le Fort in his manuscript, praises the czar more for his goodness of heart, than he blames him for his excess of passion.

• Le Fort's MS. memoirs.

The ambassadors then went through Pomerania and Berlin ; and from thence, one part took its way through Magdeburg, and the other by Hamburg, a city which already began to be considerable by its extensive commerce, but not so rich and populous as it has become since. From thence they directed their route towards Minden, crossed Westphalia, and at length, by the way of Cleves, arrived at Amsterdam.

The czar reached this city fifteen days before the ambassadors. At his first coming, he lodged in a house belonging to the East India company ; but soon afterwards he took a small apartment in the dock yard, belonging to the admiralty. He then put on the habit of a Dutch skipper, and in that dress went to the village of Saardam, a place where a great many more ships were built at that time, than at present. This village is as large, as populous, and as rich, and much neater, than many opulent towns. The czar greatly admired the multitude of people who were constantly employed there, the order and regularity of their times of working, the prodigious dispatch with which they built and fitted out ships, the incredible number of ware houses, and machines for the greater ease and security of labour. The czar began with purchasing a bark, to which he made a mast with his own hands ; after that, he worked upon all the different parts in the construction of a vessel, living in the same manner as the workmen at Saardam, dressing and eating the same as they, and working in the forges, the rope-walks, and in the several mills, which are in prodigious numbers in that village, for sawing timber, extracting oil, making paper, and wire-drawing. He caused himself to be inrolled in the list of car-

penters, by the name of Peter Michael hoff, and was commonly called Peter Bas, or Master Peter: the workmen were at first confounded at having a crowned head for a fellow-labourer, but soon became familiarised to the sight.

While he was thus handlig the compafs and the ax at Saardam, a confirmation was brought him of the division in Poland, and of the double nomination of the elector Augustus, and the prince of Conti. The carpenter of Saardam immediately promised king Augustus to afflit him with 30,000 men, and from his work loft issued out orders to his army that was assembled in the Ukraine against the Turks.

His troops gained a victory over the Tartars near Asoph *, and a few months afterwards took from them the city of Or, or Orkapi, which we call Pre-cop. As to himself, he still continued improving in different arts; he went frequently from Saardam to Amsterdam, to hear the lectures of the celebrated anatomist Ruyfch, and made himself master of several operations in surgery, which, in case of necessity, might be of use both to himself and his officers. He went through a course of natural philosophy, in the house of the Burgomaster Witzen, a person for ever estimable for his patriotic virtue, and the noble use he made of his immense riches, which he distributed like a citizen of the world, sending men of abilities, at a great expence, to all parts of the globe, in search of whatever was most rare and valuable, and fitting out vessels at his own charge to make new discoveries.

* 11th Aug. 1697.

Peter Bas, gave a truce to his labours for a short time, but it was only to pay a private visit at Utrecht, and at the Hague, to William king of England, and stadholder of the united provinces. General Le Fort was the only one admitted to the private conference of the two monarchs. Peter assisted afterwards at the public entry of his ambassadors, and at their audience: they presented in his name to the deputy of the states six hundred of the most beautiful sables that could be procured; and the states, over and above the customary presents on these occasions, of a gold chain and medal, gave them three magnificent coaches. They received the first visits of all the plenipotentiaries who were at the congress of Ryswick, excepting those of France, to whom they had not notified their arrival, not only because the czar espoused the cause of Augustus against the prince of Conti, but also because king William, whose friendship he was desirous of cultivating, was averse to a peace with France.

At his return to Amsterdam, he resumed his former occupations, and completed with his own hands a ship of sixty guns, that he had begun himself, and sent her to Archangel, which was the only port he had at that time on the ocean.

He not only engaged in his service several French refugees, Swiss and Germans; but he also sent all sorts of artists over to Moscow, and he previously made a trial of their several abilities himself. There were few trades or arts which he did not perfectly well understand in their minutest branches: he took a particular pleasure in correcting, with his own hands, the geographical maps, which at that time laid down at hazard the positions of the towns and rivers of his vast dominions, then very little

known. There is still preserved, a map, on which he marked out, with his own hand, his projected communication of the Caspian and Black seas, the execution of which he had given in charge to Mr. Brekel, a German engineer. The junction of those two seas was indeed a less difficult enterprise than that of the Ocean and Mediterranean, which was effected in France; but the very idea of joining the sea of Asoph with the Caspian, astonished the imagination at that time; but new establishments in that country became the object of his attention, in proportion as his successes begat new hopes.

His troops, commanded by general Schein, and prince Dolgorowski, had lately gained a victory over the Tartars near Asoph, and likewise over a body of Janissaries sent by sultan Mustapha to their assistance. This success served to make him more respected, even by those who blamed him as a sovereign, for having quitted his dominions, to turn workman at Amsterdam. They now saw that the affairs of the monarch did not suffer by the labours of the philosopher, the traveller, and the artificer.

He remained at Amsterdam, constantly employed in his usual occupations of ship-building, engineering, geography, and the practice of natural philosophy, till the middle of January 1693, and then he set out for England, but still as one of the retinue of his ambassadors.

King William sent his own yacht to meet him, and two ships of war as convoy. In England, he observed the same manner of living as at Amsterdam and Saardam; he took an apartment near the king's dock-yard at Deptford, where he applied himself wholly to gain instruction. The Dutch

July, 1696.

builders had only taught him their method, and the practical part of ship-building. In England, he found the art better explained ; for there they work according to mathematical proportion. He soon made himself so perfect in this science, that he was able to give lessons to others. He began to build a ship according to the English method of construction, and it proved a prime sailor. The art of watch-making, which was already brought to perfection in London, next attracted his attention, and he made himself compleat master of the whole theory ; captain Perry, the engineer who followed him from London to Russia, says, that from the casting of cannon, to the spinning of ropes, there was not any one branch of trade belonging to a ship that he did not minutely observe, and even put his hand to, as often as he came into the places where those trades were carried on.

In order to cultivate his friendship, he was allowed to engage several English artificers into his service, as he had done in Holland : but over and above artificers, he engaged likewise some mathematicians, which he would not so easily have found in Amsterdam. Ferguson, a Scotchman, an excellent geometrician, entered into his service, and was the first person who brought arithmetic into use in the exchequer in Russia, where, before that time, they made use only of the Tartarian method of reckoning, with balls strung upon a wire ; a method which supplied the place of writing, but was very perplexing and imperfect, because, after the calculation, there was no method of proving it, in order to discover any error. The Indian cyphers, which are now in use, were not introduced amongst us, till the ninth century, by Arabs ; and they did not make their way into the Russian empire, till

one thousand years afterwards. Such has been the fate of the arts, to make their progress slowly round the globe. He took with him two young students from a mathematical school, and this was the beginning of the marine academy, founded afterwards by Peter the Great. He observed and calculated eclipses with Ferguson. Perry the engineer, though greatly discontented at not being sufficiently rewarded, acknowledges, that Peter made himself a proficient in astronomy; that he perfectly well understood the motions of the heavenly bodies, as well as the laws of gravitation, by which they are directed. This force, now so evidently demonstrated, and before the time of the Great Newton so little known, by which all the planets gravitate towards each other, and which retained them in their orbits, was already become familiar to a sovereign of Russia, while other countries amused themselves with imaginary vortices, and, in Galileo's nation, one set of ignorant persons ordered others as ignorant, to believe the earth to be immovable.

Perry set out in order to effect a communication between rivers, to build bridges, and construct sluices. The czar's plan was to open a communication by means of canals between the Ocean, the Caspian, and the Black Seas.

We must not forget to observe, that a set of English merchants, with the marquis of Carmarthen at their head, gave Peter 15,000 pounds sterling, for the permission of vending tobacco in Russia. The patriarch, by a mistaken severity, had interdicted this branch of trade; for the Russian church forbid smoking, as an unclean and sinful action. Peter, who knew better things, and who, amongst his many projected changes, medi-

tated a reformation of the church, introduced this commodity of trade into his dominions.

Before Peter left England, he was entertained by king William with a spectacle worthy such a guest: this was a mock sea-fight. Little was it then imagined, that the czar would one day fight a real battle on this element against the Swedes, and gain naval victories in the Baltic. In fine, William made him a present of the vessel in which he used to go over to Holland, called the Royal Transport, a beautiful yacht, and magnificently adorned. In this vessel Peter returned to Holland the latter end of 1693, taking with him three captains of ships of war, five and twenty captains of merchant ships, forty lieutenants, thirty pilots, as many surgeons, and two hundred and fifty gunners, and upwards of three hundred artificers. This little colony of persons skilful in all branches, sailed from Holland to Archangel, on board the Royal Transport, and from thence were distributed into all the different places where their services were necessary. Those who had been engaged at Amsterdam, went by the way of Narva, which then belonged to the Swedes.

While he was thus transplanting the arts and manufactures of England and Holland into his own country, the officers, whom he had sent to Rome, and other places in Italy, had likewise engaged some artists in his service. General Scheremetow, who was at the head of his embassy to Italy, took the tour of Rome, Naples, Venice, and Malta, while the czar proceeded to Vienna with his other ambassadors. He had now only to view the military discipline of the Germans, after having seen the English fleets, and the dock-yards of Holland. Politics had likewise as great a share in

this journey as the desire of instruction. The emperor was his natural ally against the Turks. Peter had a private audience of Leopold, and the two monarchs conferred standing, to avoid the trouble of ceremony.

There happened nothing worthy remark during his stay at Vienna, except the celebration of the ancient feast of the Landlord and Landlady which had been disused for a long time, and which Leopold thought proper to revive upon the czar's account. This feast, which, by the Germans, is called *Wirtschaft*, is celebrated in the following manner :

The emperor is landlord and the empress landlady ; the king of the Romans, the archdukes and the archduchesses are generally their assistants : they entertain people of all nations as their guests, who come drest after the most ancient fashion of their respective countries : those who are invited to the feast, draw lots for tickets, one each of which is written the name of the nation, and the character of the person they are to represent. One perhaps draws a ticket for a Chinese mandarin ; another for a Tartarian Mirza ; a third a Persian fatrap ; and a fourth for a Roman senator ; and a princess may, by her ticket, be a gardener's wife, or a milk maid ; a prince a peasant, or a common soldier. Dances are composed suitable to all these characters, and the landlord and the landlady with the family wait at the table. Such was the ancient institution ; but on this occasion * Joseph king of the Romans, and the countess of Traun, represented the ancient Egyptians. The archduke Charles, and the countess of Walstein, were dressed like the

* Le Fort's MSS, and those of Petersburg.

Flemings in the time of Charles the Fifth. The archduchess Mary-Elizabeth, and count Traun, were in the habits of Tartars; the archduchess Josephina, and the count of Workflaw, were habited like Persians; and the archduchess Mariamne, and prince Maximilian of Hanover, in the character of North Holland peasants. Peter appeared in the dress of a Friesland boor, and all who spoke to him addressed him in that character, at the same time talking to him of the great czar of Muscovy. These are trifling particulars; but whatever revives the remembrance of ancient manners and customs, is in some degree worthy of being recorded.

Peter was ready to set out from Vienna, in order to proceed to Venice, to compleat his tour of instruction, when he received the news of a rebellion, which had lately broke out, in his dominions.

C H A P. X.

A CONSPIRACY punished.

The corps of the Strelitzes abolished. Alterations in customs, manners, church, and state.

CZAR Peter, when he left his dominions to set out on his travels, had provided against every incident, even that of a rebellion. But the great and serviceable things he had done for his country proved the very cause of this rebellion.

Certain old boyars, to whom the ancient customs were still dear, and some priests, to whom the new ones appeared little better than sacrilege, began these disturbances; and the old faction of the

princess Sophia took this opportunity to rouse it-self anew. It is said, that one of her sisters, who was confined to the same monastery, contributed not a little to excite these seditions. Care was taken to spread abroad the danger to be feared from the introduction of foreigners to instruct the nation. In short, who would believe, that the permission which the czar had given to import tobacco into his empire, contrary to the inclination of the clergy, was one of the chief motives of the insurrection? Superstition, the scourge of every country, and yet the darling of the multitude, spread itself from the common people to the Strelitzes, who had been scattered on the frontiers of Lithuania: they assembled in a body, and marched towards Moscow, with the intent to place the princess Sophia on the throne, and for ever to prevent the return of a czar who had violated the established customs, by presuming to travel for instruction among foreigners. The forces commanded by Schein and Gordon, who were much better disciplined than the Strelitzes, met with them three leagues from Moscow, gave them battle, and entirely defeated them: but this advantage gained by a foreign general over the ancient militia, among whom were several of the burghers of Moscow, contributed still more to irritate the people.

To quell these tumults, the czar sets out privately from Vienna, passes through Poland, has a private interview with Augustus, concert's measures with that prince for extending the Russian dominions on the side of the Baltic, and at length arrived at Moscow, where he imposed every one

to a fine*: he then offers rewards on

the troops who had defeated the Strelitzes, of whom the prisons were now full. If the crimes of these unhappy wretches were great, their punishment was no less so. Their leaders, with several of their officers and priests, were condemned to death; some were broke upon the wheel †, and two women were buried alive; upwards of two thousand of the Strelitzes were executed, part of whom were hung round about the walls of the city, and others put to death in different manners, and their dead bodies remained exposed for two days in the high roads, particularly about the monastery where the princesses Sophia and Eudocia resided ‡. Monuments of stone were erected, on which their crimes and punishments were set forth. A great number of them who had wives and children at Moscow, were dispersed with their families into Siberia, the kingdom of Astracan, and the country of Asoph. This punishment was at least of service to the state, as they helped to cultivate and people a large tract of waste land.

Perhaps, if the czar had not found it absolutely necessary to make such terrible examples, he might have employed part of these Strelitzes, whom he put to death, upon the public works; whereas they were now left both to him and the state: the lives of men ought to be held in great estimation, especially in a country where the encrease of inhabitants ought to have been the principal care of the legislature; but he thought it necessary to terrify and break the spirit of the nation by executions and the parade attending them. The entire

† Memoirs of captain Perry the engineer, employed by Peter the Great in Russia, and MSS. of Le Fort.

‡ MSS. of Le Fort.

corps of the Strelitzes, whose number not one of his predecessors had even dared to think of diminishing, was broke for ever, and their very name abolished. This change was effected without any resistance, because matters had been properly prepared beforehand. The Turkish sultan, Osmann, as I have already remarked, was deposed and murdered in the same century, only for giving the Janissaries room to suspect that he intended to lessen their number. Peter had better success, because he had taken better measures.

Of this powerful and numerous body of the Strelitzes, he left only two feeble regiments, from whom there could no longer be any danger; and yet these, still retaining their old spirit of mutiny, revolted again in Astracan, in the year 1705, but were quickly suppressed.

But while we are relating Peter's severity in this affair of state, let us not forget to commemorate the more than equal humanity he shewed some time afterwards, when he lost his favourite Le Fort, who was snatched away by an untimely fate*, at the age of forty-six. He paid him the same funeral honours as are bestowed on the greatest sovereigns, and assisted himself in the procession, carrying a pike in his hand, and marching after the captains, in the rank of a lieutenant, which he held in the deceased general's regiment, hereby setting an example to his nobles, of the respect due to merit and the military rank.

After the death of Le Fort, it appeared plainly, that the changes in that state were not owing to that general, but to the czar himself. Peter had indeed been confirmed in his design, by his sever-

* March 12, 1699, N. S.

al conversations with Le Fort; but had formed and executed them all without his assistance.

As soon as he had suppressed the Strelitzes, he established regular regiments on the German model, who were all clothed in a short and commodious uniform, in the room of those long and troublesome coats, which they used to wear before; and, at the same time, their exercise was likewise more regular.

The regiment of Preobrazinski guards were already formed: it had taken its name from the first company of fifty men, whom the czar had trained up in his younger days in his retreat at Preobrazinski, at the time when his sister Sophia governed the state, and the other regiment of guards was also established.

As he had himself passed through the lowest degrees in the army, he was resolved that the sons of his boyars and great men should serve as common soldiers before they were made officers. He sent some of the young nobility on board his fleet at Woronitz and Atoph, where he obliged them to serve their apprenticeship as common sea-men. No one dared to dispute the commands of a master, who had himself set the example. The English and Dutch he had brought over with him, were employed in equipping this fleet for sea, in constructing sluices, and building docks for careening the ships, and to resume the great work of joining the Don and the Volga, which had been dropped by Brekel the German. And now he began to set about his projected reformations in the council of state, in the revenue, in the church, and even in society itself.

The affairs of the revenue had been hitherto administered much in the same manner as in Turkey.

Each boyar paid a stipulated sum for his lands, which he raised upon the peasants his vassals; the czar appointed certain burghers and burgomasters, to be his receivers, who were not powerful enough to claim the right of paying only such sums as they thought proper, into the public treasury. This new administration of the finances, was what cost him the most trouble: he was obliged to try several methods before he could fix upon a proper one.

The reformation of the church, which in all other countries is looked upon as a dangerous and difficult an attempt, was not so to him. The patriarchs had at times opposed the authority of the crown, as well as the Strelitzes; Nicon with insolence, Joachim, one of his successors, in an artful manner.

The bishops had arrogated the power of life and death, a prerogative directly contrary to the spirit of religion, and the subordination of government. This assumed power, which had been of long standing, was now taken from them. The patriarch Adrian, dying at the close of this century, Peter declared that there should for the future be no other.

This dignity then was entirely suppressed, and the great income belonging thereto was united to the public revenue, which stood in need of this addition. Although the czar did not set himself up at the head of the Russian church, as the kings of Great-Britain have done in regard to the church of England; yet he was, in fact, absolute master over it, because the synods did not dare either to disobey the commands of a despotic sovereign, or to dispute with a prince who had more knowledge than themselves.

We need only to cast an eye on the preamble to the edict, concerning his ecclesiastical regulations, issued in 1721, to be convinced that he acted at once as master and legislator: "We should deem "ourselves guilty of ingratitude to the Most High, "if, after having reformed the military and civil "orders, we neglected the spiritual, etc. For "this cause, following the example of the most "ancient kings, who have been famed for piety, "we have taken upon us to make certain whole- "some regulations, touching the clergy." It is true, he convened a synod for carrying into execution his ecclesiastical degrees; but the members of this synod, at entering upon their office, were to take the oath, the form of which had been drawn up and signed by himself. This was an oath of submission and obedience, and was conceived in the following terms; "I swear to be a faithful "and obedient servant and subject to my true "and natural sovereign, and to the august suc- "cessors whom it shall please him to nominate, "in virtue of the incontestible right of which he is possessed: I acknowledge him to be the supreme judge of this spiritual college: I swear by the all-seeing God that I understand and mean this oath in the full force and sense, which the words convey to those who read or hear it," This oath is much stronger than that of the supremacy in England. The Russian monarch was not, indeed, one of the fathers of the synod, but he dictated their laws; and though he did not touch the holy censer, he directed the hands that held it.

Previous to this great work, he thought, that in a state like his, which stood in need of being peopled, the celibacy of the monks was contrary to nature, and to the public good. It was the

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ancient custom of the Russian church, for secular priests to marry at least once in their lives; they were even obliged so to do: and formerly they ceased to be priests as soon as they lost their wives. But that a multitude of young people of both sexes, should make a vow of living useless in a cloister, and at the expence of others, appeared to him a dangerous institution. He therefore, ordered, that no one should be admitted to a monastic life, till they were fifty years old, a time of life, very rarely subject to a temptation of this kind; and he forbade any person to be admitted, of what age soever, who was actually in possession of any public employ.

This regulation has been repealed since his death, because the government has thought proper to shew more complaisance to the monasteries: but the patriarchal dignity has never been revived, and its great revenues are now appropriated to the payment of the troops.

These alterations at first excited some murmurings. A certain priest wrote, to prove that Peter was antichrist, because he would not admit of a patriarch: and the art of printing was made use of to publish libels against him: but on the other hand, there was another priest who started up, to prove that Peter could not be antichrist, because the number 666 was not to be found in his name, and that he had not the sign of the Beast. All complaints, however, were soon quieted. Peter, in fact, gave much more to the church, than he took from it; for he made the clergy, by degrees, more regular and more learned. He founded three colleges at Moscow, where they teach the languages, and where those who are designed for the priesthood are obliged to study.

One of the most necessary reforms, was the suppression, or at least the mitigation, of the three Lents, an ancient superstition of the Greek church, and as prejudicial with respect to those who are employed in public works, and especially to soldiers, as was the old Jewish superstition of not fighting on the sabbath day. Accordingly the czar dispensed with his workmen and soldiers at least, observing these Lents, in which, though they were not permitted to eat, they were accustomed to get drunk. He likewise dispensed with their observance of meagre day: the chaplains of the fleet and army were obliged to set the example which they did without much reluctance.

The calendar was an object of importance. Formerly, in all the countries of the world, the chiefs of religion had the care of regulating the year, not only on account of the feasts to be observed, but because in ancient times, the priests were the only persons who understood astronomy.

The year began with the Russians on the first of September. Peter ordered, that it should for the future commence the first day of January, as among the other nations of Europe. This alteration was to take place in the year 1700, at the beginning of the century, which he celebrated by a jubilee, and other grand solemnities. It was a matter of surprise to the common people, how the czar should be able to change the course of the sun. Some obstinate persons, persuaded that God had created the world in September, continued their old style: but the alteration took place in all the public offices in the whole court of chancery, and in a little throughout the whole empire. Peter did not adopt the Gregorian calendar, because it had been rejected by the English mathe-

maticians ; but which must, nevertheless, be one day received in all countries.

Ever since the fifth century, the time when letters first came in use amongst them, they had been accustomed to write upon long rolls, made either of the bark of trees, or of parchment, and afterwards of paper ; and the czar was obliged to publish an edict, ordering every one, for the future, to write after our manner.

The reformation now became general. Their marriages were made formerly after the same manner as in Turkey and Persia, where the bridegroom does not see his bride till the contract is signed, and they can no longer go from their words. This custom may do well enough amongst those people where polygamy prevails, and where the women are always shut up ; but it is a very bad one in countries where a man is confined to one wife, and where divorces are seldom allowed.

The czar was willing to accustom his people to the manners and customs of the nations, which he had visited in his travels, and from whence he had taken the masters, who were now instructing them.

It appeared necessary, that the Russians should not be dressed in a different manner from those who were teaching them the arts and sciences ; because the aversion to strangers, which is but too natural to mankind, is not a little kept up by a difference of dress. The full dress, which at that time partook of the fashions of the Poles, the Tartars, and the ancient Hungarians, was, as we have elsewhere observed, very noble ; but the dress of the burghers and common people resembled those jackets plaited round the wrist which are still given to the poor children in some of the French hospitals. In general, the robe was generally the

dress of all nations, as being a garment that required the least trouble and art; and for the same reason, the beard was suffered to grow. The czar met with but little difficulty in introducing our mode of dress, and the custom of shaving among his courtiers; but the people was more obstinate, and he found himself obliged to lay a tax on long coats and beards. Patterns of close-bodied coats were hung up in public places; and whoever refused to pay the tax, were obliged to suffer their robes, and their beards, to be curtailed. All this was done in a jocular manner, and this air of pleasantry prevented seditions.

It has ever been the aim of all legislators, to render mankind more sociable; but it is not sufficient to effect this end, that they live together in towns; there must be a mutual intercourse of civility. This intercourse sweetens all the bitterness of life. The czar therefore, introduced these assemblies, which the Italians call *ridotti*. To these assemblies he invited all the ladies of his court, with their daughters, and they were to appear dressed after the fashions of the southern nations of Europe. He was even himself at the pains of drawing up rules for all the little decorums to be observed at these social entertainments. Thus even to good breeding among his subjects, all was his own work, and that of time.

To make his people relish these innovations the better, he abolished the word *gouvt, slave*, always made use of by the Russians when they addressed their czar, or presented any petition to him; and ordered, that, for the future, they should make use of the word, *razh*, which signifies *subject*. This alteration in no wise diminished the obedience due to the sovereign, and yet was the most ready means

of conciliating their affections. Every month produced some new change or institution. He carried his attention even to the ordering painted posts to be set up in the road between Moscow and Woronitz, to serve as mile-stones at the distance of every verst, that is to say, every seven hundred paces; and had a kind of caravanseras, or public inns, built at the end of every twentieth verst.

While he was thus extending his cares to the common people, to the merchants, and to the traveller, he thought proper to make an addition to the pomp and splendor of his own court. For though he hated pomp or shew in his own person, he thought it necessary in those about him. He, therefore, instituted the order of St Andrew*, in imitation of the several orders with which all the courts of Europe abound. Golowin, who succeeded Le Fort in the dignity of high admiral, was the first knight of this order. It was esteemed an high reward, to have the honour of being admitted a member. It was a kind of badge that entitled the person who bore it, to the respect of the people. This mark of honour costs nothing to the sovereign, and flatters the self-love of a subject, without rendering him too powerful.

These many useful innovations were received with applause by the wiser part of the nation; and the murmurings and complaints of those who had adhered to the ancients customs, were drowned in the acclamations of men of sound judgment.

While Peter was thus beginning a new creation in the interior part of his state, he concluded an advantageous truce with the Turks, which gave

* 10th Sept. 1698. It is to be observed, that I always follow the new style in my dates.

him the liberty to extend his territories on another side. Mustapha the Second, who had been defeated by prince Eugene, at the battle of Zeuta in 1697, stripped of the Morea by the Venetians, and unable to defend Asoph, was obliged to make peace with his victorious enemies ; which peace was concluded at Carlowitz, between Peterwaradin and Salankamen, places made famous by his defeats †. Temeswaer was made the boundary of the German possessions, and of the Ottoman dominions. Kaminiiek was restored to the Poles ; the Morea, and some towns in Dalmatia, which had been taken by the Venetians, remained in their hands for some time ; and Peter the First continued in possession of Asoph, and of a few forts built in its neighbourhood.

It was not possible for the czar to extend his dominions on the side of Turkey, without drawing upon him the forces of that empire, before divided, but now united. His naval projects were too vast for the Palus Maeotis, and the settlements on the Caspian sea would not admit of a fleet of men of war : he, therefore, turned his views towards the Baltic sea, but without relinquishing those in regard to the Tanais and Wolga.

† Jan. 26, 1699.

C H A P. XI.

War with S W E D E N.

The Battle of N A R V A.

A GRAND scene was now opened on the frontiers of Sweden *. One of the principal causes of all the revolutions which happened from Ingria, as far as Dresden, and which laid waste so many countries for the space of eighteen years was the abuse of the supreme power, by Charles XI. king of Sweden, father of Charles XII. This is a fact which cannot be often repeated, as it concerns every crowned head, and the subjects of every nation. Almost all Livonia, with the whole of Estonia, had been ceded by the Poles to Charles XI. king of Sweden, who succeeded Charles X. exactly at the time of the treaty of Oliva. It was ceded in the customary manner, with a reservation of rights and privileges. Charles XI shewing little regard to these privileges, John Renold Patkul, a gentleman of Livonia, came to Stockholm in 1692, at the head of six deputies from the province, and laid their complaints at the foot of the throne, in respectful, but strong terms†. Instead of an answer, the deputies were ordered to be imprisoned, and

* 1700.

† Norberg, chaplain and confessor to Charles XII. says in his history. “ That he had the insolence to complain of oppressions, and that he was condemned to lose his honour and life.” This is speaking like the high priest of despotism. He should have observed, that no one can deprive a citizen of his honour, for doing his duty.

Patkul was condemned to lose his honour, and his life. But he lost neither, for he made his escape to the country of Vaud in Switzerland, where he remained sometime. When he afterwards was informed, that Augustus, elector of Saxony, had promised at his accession to the throne of Poland, to recover the provinces that had been wrested from that kingdom; he hastened to Dresden, to represent to that prince, how easily he might make himself master of Livonia, and revenge upon a king, only seventeen years of age, the losses that Poland had sustained by his ancestors.

At this very time czar Peter entertained thoughts of seizing upon Ingria and Carelia. These provinces had formerly belonged to the Russians, but the Swedes had made themselves masters of them by force of arms, in the time of the false Demetrius's, and had retained the possession of them by treaties: another war and new treaties might restore them again to Russia. Patkul went from Dresden to Moscow, and by exciting up the two monarchs to avenge his cause, he cemented a close union between them, and directed their preparations for invading all the places, situated to the east and south of Finland.

Just at this period, the new king of Denmark, Frederic IV. entered into an alliance with the czar and the king of Poland, against Charles, the young king of Sweden, who seemed in no condition to withstand their united forces. Patkul had the satisfaction of besieging the Swedes in Riga, the capital of Livonia, and directing the attack in quality of major general.

The czar marched near sixty thousand men into Ingria. It is true, that, in this numerous army, he had not more than 12,000 good soldiers, being

those he had disciplined himself; namely the two regiments of guards, and some few others; the rest being a badly armed militia, with some Cossacks, and Circassian Tartars; but he carried with him a train of 145 pieces of cannon. He laid siege to Narva, a small town in Ingria, that had a very commodious harbour, and it was generally thought the place would prove an easy conquest.

It was known to all Europe *, how Charles XII. when not quite eighteen years of age, made head against all his enemies, and attacked them one after another. He entered Denmark, put an end to the war in that kingdom in less than six weeks, sent succours to Riga, obliged the enemy to raise the siege, and marched against the Russians encamped before Narva, through the midst of ice and snow, in the month of November.

The czar, who looked upon Narva as already in his possession, was gone to Nevogorod, and had taken with him his favourite, Menzikoff, then a lieutenant in the company of bombardiers of the Preobazinski regiment †, and afterwards raised to the rank of field marshal, and prince; a man whose singular fortunes entitle him to be spoken of more at large in another place.

Peter left the command of the army, with his instructions for the siege, with the prince of Croy; whose family came from Flanders, and who had lately entered into the czar's service ‡. Prince Dolgorouki acted as commissary of the army. The jealousy between these two chiefs, and the absence of the czar, were partly the occasion of the unparalleled defeat at Narva.

* Sept. 1700. † Nov. 18. ‡ See the history of Charles XII.

Charles XII. having landed at Pernau in Livonia with his troops, in the month of October, advanced northward to Revel, where he defeated an advanced body of Russians. He continued his march, and meeting with another body routed that likewise. The runaways returned to the camp before Narva, which they filled with consternation. The month of November was far advanced ; Narva, tho' unskilfully besieged, was on the point of surrendering. The young king of Sweden had not at that time above 9000 men with him, and could bring only six pieces of cannon to oppose to an hundred and forty-five, with which the Russian entrenchments were defended. All the relations of that time, and all historians without exception, concur in making the Russian army then before Narva, amount to 80,000 men. The memoirs with which I have been furnished say 60,000 ; be that as it may, it is certain, that Charles had not quite 5000, and that this battle was one of those, which have proved, that the greatest victories have been frequently gained by inferior numbers, ever since the famed one of Arbeila.

Charles did not hesitate one moment to attack with his small troops this army, so greatly superior : and taking advantage of a violent wind, and a great storm of snow, which blew directly in the faces of the Russians ; he attacked their entrenchments under cover of some pieces of cannon *, which he had posted advantageously for the purpose. The Russians had not time to form themselves in the midst of that cloud of snow, that beat full in their faces, and astonished by the discharge of cannon, that they could not see ; and never imagined how small a number they had to oppose.

* Nov. 30. 1700.

The duke de Croy attempted to give his orders, but prince Dolgorouki would not receive them. The Russian officers rose upon the German officers; the duke's secretary, with colonel Lyon, and several others, were murdered. Every one abandoned his post: and tumult, confusion, and a panic terror, spread through the whole army. The Swedish troops had nothing more to do, but to cut in pieces those who were flying. Some threw themselves into the river Narva, where great numbers were drowned; others threw down their arms, and fell upon their knees before the conquering Swedes.

The duke de Croy, general Allard, and the rest of the general officers, dreading the Russians more than the Swedes, went in a body and surrendered themselves prisoners to count Steinbok. The king of Sweden now made himself master of all the artillery. Thirty thousand of the vanquished enemy laid down their arms at his feet, and filed off bare-headed and disarmed before him. Prince Dolgorouki, and all the Russian generals, came and surrendered themselves, as well as the Germans, but did not know till after they surrendered, that they had been conquered by 8000 men. Amongst the prisoners, was the son of a king of Georgia, whom Charles sent to Stockholm: his name was Mittelefsky Czarovitz, or czar's son, an additional proof, that the title of czar, or tsar, had not its original from the Roman Cæfars.

Charles XII. did not lose more than 1200 men in this battle. The czar's journal, which has been sent me from Petersburg, says, that including those who died at the siege of Narva, and in the battle, and those who were drowned in their flight, the Russians lost no more than 6000 men. Want of

discipline, and a panic that seized the army, did all the work of that fatal day. The number of those made prisoners of war, was four times greater than that of the conquerors ; and if we may believe Norberg †, count Piper, who was afterwards taken prisoner by the Russians, reproached them, that the number of their people, made prisoners in the battle, exceeded by eight times the number of the whole Swedish army. If this is truth, the Swedes must have made upwards of 72,000 prisoners. This shews how seldom writers are well informed of particular circumstances. One thing, however, equally incontestible and extraordinary is, that the king of Sweden permitted one half of the Russian soldiers to retire back, after having disarmed them, and the other half to repass the river, with their arms ; by this unaccountable presumption, restoring to the czar troops that, being afterwards well disciplined, became invincible ‡.

Charles had all the advantages that could result from a compleat victory. Immense magazines, transports loaded with provisions, posts evacuated or taken, and the whole country at the mercy of the Swedish army, were consequences of the fortune of this day. Narva was now relieved, the shattered remains of the Russian army did not show themselves ; the whole country as far as Pleskow lay open ; the czar seemed bereft of all resource for carrying on the war ; and the king of

† Vol. I. p. 439, of the 4to edition printed at the Hague.

‡ The chaplain Norberg pretends, that, immediately after the battle of Narva, the Grand Signior wrote a letter of congratulation to the king of Sweden, in these terms. " The sultan Baffa, by the grace of God to Charles XII &c " The letter was dated from the aera of the creation of the world.

Sweden, victor in less than twelve months over the monarchs of Denmark, Poland, and Russia, was looked upon as the first prince in Europe, at an age when other princes hardly presume to aspire at reputation. But the unshaken constancy that made a part of Peter's character, prevented him from being discouraged in any of his projects.

A Russian bishop composed a prayer to St. Nicholas *, on account of this defeat, which was publicly read in all the churches throughout Russia. This composition shews the spirit of the times, and the inexpressible ignorance from which Peter delivered his country. Amongst other things, it says, that the furious and terrible Swedes were foresters; and complains that St. Nicholas had entirely abandoned his Russians. The prelates of that country would blush to write such stuff at present; and, without any offence to the holy St. Nicholas, the people soon perceived that Peter was the most proper person to be applied to, to retrieve their losses.

* This prayer is printed in most of the journals and historical pieces of these times. It is inserted in the history of Charles XII. King of Sweden.

C H A P. XII.

Resources after the battle of Narva. That disaster entirely repaired. Peter gains a victory near the same place. The person, who was afterwards emperess, made prisoner at the storming of a town. Peter's successes. His triumph at Moscow *.

The years 1701 and 1702.

THE czar having, as has been already observed, quitted his army before Narva, in the end of November 1700, in order to go and concert matters with the king of Poland, received the news of the victory gained by the Swedes as he was on his way. His constancy in all emergencies was equal to the intrepidity and valour of Charles. He deferred the conference with Augustus, and hattered to repair the disordered state of his affairs. The scattered troops rendezvoused at Great Novgorod, and from thence marched to Pleskow on the Lake Peipus.

It was not a little matter to be able to stand up on the defensive, after so severe a check: "I know very well," said Peter, "that the Swedes will have the advantage of us for some time, but they will teach us at length to conquer them."

Having provided for the present emergency †, and ordered recruits to be raised on every side, he sent to Moscow to cast new cannon, his own having been all taken before Narva. There being a

* This chapter, and the following, are taken entirely from the journal of Peter the Great, sent me from Petersburg.

† 1701.

scarcity of metal, he took all the bells of the churches and of the religious houses in Moscow. This action did not favour much of superstition, but at the same time it was no mark of impiety. With those bells he made one hundred large cannon, 143 field pieces, from three to six pounders, besides mortars and haubitzes, which were all sent to Pleskow. In other countries, the sovereign orders, and others execute; but here the czar was obliged to see every thing done himself. While he was hastening these preparations, he entered into a negotiation with the king of Denmark, who engaged to furnish him with three regiments of foot, and three of cavalry; an engagement which that monarch could not fulfil.

As soon as this treaty was signed, he hurried to the theatre of war. He had an interview with king Augustus at Birzen, on the frontiers of Courland and Lithuania †. His object was, to confirm that prince in his resolution of maintaining the war against Charles XII. and at the same time to engage the Polish Diet to enter into the quarrel. It is well known, that a king of Poland is no more than the head person in a republic. The czar had the advantage of being always obeyed: but the kings of Poland, and England, and at present the king of Sweden, are all obliged to treat with their subjects. Patkul and a few Poles in the interest of their monarch assisted at these conferences. Peter promised to aid them with subsidies, and an army of 25,000 men. Livonia was to be restored to Poland, in case the diet would concur with their king, and assist in recovering this province; the diet hearkened more to their fears,

† Feb. 27.

than to the czar's proposals. The Poles were apprehensive of having their liberties restrained by the Saxons, and Russians, and were still more afraid of Charles XII. It was therefore agreed by the majority, not to serve their king, and not to fight.

The partisans of Augustus grew enraged against the contrary faction, and a civil war was lighted up in the kingdom; because their monarch had an intention to restore to it a considerable province.

Peter then had only an impotent ally in king Augustus *, and feeble succours in the Saxon troops; and the terror which Charles XII. inspired on every side, reduced Peter to the necessity of depending entirely upon his own strength.

After travelling with the greatest expedition from Moscow to Courland †, to confer with Augustus; he posted back from Courland to Moscow, to forward the accomplishment of his promises. He actually dispatched prince Repnin, with 4000 men, to Riga, on the banks of the Duna, where the Saxon troops were entrenched.

The general consternation was now increased ‡; for Charles passing the Duna, in spite of all the Saxons, who were advantageously posted on the opposite side, gained a compleat victory over them; and then, without waiting a moment, he made himself master of Courland, advanced into Lithuania, and by his presence encouraged the Polith faction that opposed Augustus.

Peter, notwithstanding all this, still pursued his designs. General Patkul, who had been the foul of the conference at Birzen, and who had engaged in his service, procured him with some Ger-

* Feb. 1791.

† March 1.

‡ July.

man officers, disciplined his troops, and supplied the place of general le Fort : in short, he finished what the other began. The czar ordered relays of horses to be provided for all the officers, and even for the German, Livonian, and Polish soldiers, who came to serve in his armies. He likewise inspected in person into every particular relating to their arms, their clothing and subsistence.

On the confines of Livonia and Estonia, and to the eastward of the province of Novogorod, lies the great lake Peipus, which receives the water of the river Velika, from out of the middle of Livonia, and gives rise in its northern part to the river Naiova, that washes the walls of the town Narva, near which the Swedes gained their famous victory. This lake is upwards of thirty leagues in length, and from twelve to fifteen in breadth. It was necessary to keep a fleet there, to prevent the Swedish ships from insulting the province of Novogorod ; to be ready to make a descent upon their coasts, and above all, to be a nursery for seamen. Peter employed the greatest part of the year 1701, in building on this lake an hundred half gallies, to carry about fifty men each ; and other armed barks were fitted out on the lake Ladoga. He directed all these operations in person, and set his new sailors to work : those who had been employed in 1697, at the Palus Meotis were then stationed near the Baltic. He frequently quitted those occupations to go to Moscow, and the rest of the provinces ; in order, to enforce the observance of the late customs he had introduced, or to establish new ones.

Those princes who have employed the leisure moments of peace, in raising public works, have acquired to themselves a name ; but that Peter, just

after his misfortune at Narva, should apply to the junction of the Baltic, Caspian and the European seas by canals, has crowned him with more real glory, than the most signal victory. It was in the year 1702, that he began to dig that deep canal, intended to join the Tanais and the Wolga. Other communications were likewise to be made, by means of lakes between the Tanais and the Duna; whose waters empty themselves into the Baltic, in the neighbourhood of Riga. But this latter project seemed to be still at a great distance, as Peter was far from having Riga in his possession.

While Charles was laying all Poland waste, Peter caused to be brought from that kingdom, and from Saxony a number of shepherds with their flocks, in order to have wool fit for making good cloth; he likewise erected manufactures fit for linen and paper: gave orders for collecting a number of artificers; such as smiths, braziers, armourers and founders: and the mines of Siberia were ransacked for ore. Thus was he continually labouring for the embellishment and defence of his dominions.

Charles pursued the course of his victories, and left a sufficient body of troops, as he imagined, on the frontiers of the czar's dominions, to secure all the possessions of Sweden. He had already formed a design to dethrone Augustus, and afterwards to pursue the czar with his victorious army to the very gates of Moscow.

There happened several slight engagements, in the course of this year, between the Russians and Swedes in which the latter did not always prove superior; and even in those where they had the advantage, the Russians improved in the art of war. In short, in little more than twelve months

after the battle of Narva, the czar's troops were so well disciplined, that they defeated one of the best generals belonging to the king of Sweden.

Peter was then at Pleskow, from whence he detached numerous bodies of troops on all sides, to attack the Swedes; who were now defeated by a native of Russia and not a foreigner. His general Scheremetow, by a skilful manœuvre, beat up the quarters of the Swedish general Slippembac, in several places near Derpt *, on the frontiers of Livonia; and at last obtained a victory over that officer himself. And now, for the first time, the Russians took from the Swedes four of their colours; which was thought a considerable number.

The lakes Peipus and Ladago were for sometime afterwards the theatres of the sea fights, between the Russians and Swedes; in which the latter had the same advantages as by land; namely that of discipline and long practice: but the Russians had some few successes with their half gallies, at the lake Peipus, and the field marshal Scheremetow took a Swedish frigate †.

By means of this lake the czar kept Livonia and Estonia in continual alarms; his gallies frequently landed several regiments in those provinces; who re-embarked whenever they failed of success, or else pursued their advantage; the Swedes were twice beaten in the neighbourhood of Derpt ‡, while they were victorious every where else.

In all these actions the Russians were always superior in number: for this reason, Charles XII. who was so successful in every other place, gave himself little concern about these trifling advantages gained by the czar: but he should have con-

* Jan. II. 1702.

† May.

‡ June and July.

sidered, that these numerous forces of his rival were every day growing more accustomed to the business of fighting, and might soon become formidable to himself.

While both parties were thus engaged by sea and land in Livonia, Ingria and Estonia, the czar is informed, that a Swedish fleet had set sail in order to destroy Archangel; upon which he immediately marched thither, and every one was astonished to hear of him on the coasts of the frozen sea, when he was thought to be at Moscow. He put the town into a posture of defence, prevented the intended descent, drew the plan of a citadel, called the New Dwina, laid the first stone, and then returned to Moscow, and from thence to the seat of war.

Charles made some alliances in Poland; but the Russians, on their side, made a progress in Ingria and Livonia. Marshal Schermetow marched to meet the Swedish Army under the command of Slippembac, gave that general battle near the little river Embac, and defeated him, taking sixteen colours, and twenty pieces of cannon. Norberg places this action on the first of December 1701; but the journal of Peter the Great fixes it on the 19th of July 1702.

After this advantage the Russian general marched onwards †, laid the whole country under contribution, and takes the little town of Marienburg on the confines of Ingria and Livonia. There are several towns of this name in the north of Europe; but this, though it no longer exists, is more celebrated in history, than all the others, by the adventure of the empress Catharine.

† August 6th.

This little town, having surrendered at discretion, the Swedes, who defended it, either through mistake or design, set fire to the magazine. The Russians, incensed at this, destroyed the town, and carried away all the inhabitants. Among the prisoners was a young woman, a native of Livonia, who had been brought up in the house of a Lutheran minister of that place, named Gluck, and who afterwards became the sovereign of those who had taken her captive, and who governed Russia by the name of the empress Catharine.

There had been many instances before this of private women being raised to the throne. Nothing was more common in Russia, and in all Asiatic kingdoms, than for crowned heads to marry their own subjects; but that a poor stranger, who had been taken prisoner in the storming of a town, should become the absolute sovereign of that very empire, whither she was led captive, is an instance which fortune and merit never produced before nor since in the annals of the world.

The Russian arms proved equally successful in Ingria; for their half gallies on the lake of Ladoga compelled the Swedish fleet to retire to Viborg †, a town at the other extremity of this great lake, from whence they could see the siege of the fortress of Noteburg, which was then carrying on by general Scheremetow. This was an undertaking of much greater importance than was imagined at that time, as it might open a communication with the Baltic Sea, the constant aim of Peter the Great.

† This seems a mistake; our author probably meant to say Kexholm, because Viborg is not on the lake Ladoga, but on the gulf of Finland.

Noteburg was a strong fortified town, built on an island in the lake Ladoga, which it entirely commands, and by that means, whoever is in possession of it, must be masters of that part of the river Neva, which falls into the sea not far from thence. The Russians bombarded the town night and day, from the 18th of September to the 12th of October; and at length gave a general assault by three breaches. The Swedish garrison was reduced to an hundred men, only capable of defending the place; and what is very astonishing, they did defend it, and obtained even in the breach, an honourable capitulation. Colonel Slippembac, who commanded there, would not surrender the town, but on condition of being permitted to send for two Swedish officers from the nearest post, to examine the breaches, in order to be witnesses for him to the king his master, that eighty three men, who were all then left of the garrison capable of bearing arms, besides 156 sick and wounded, did not surrender to a whole army, till it was impossible for them to fight longer, or to preserve the place. This circumstance alone shews, what sort of an enemy the czar had to contend with, and the necessity there was of all his great efforts and military discipline. He distributed gold medals among his officers on this occasion, and gave rewards to all the private men; except a few, whom he punished for running away, during the assault. Their comrades spit in their faces, and afterwards shot them to death, thus adding ignominy to punishment.

Noteburg was repaired, and its name changed to that of Shlusselburg, or the city of Key, that place being the key of Ingria and Finland, The

‡ Oct. 16.

first governor was that Menzikoff whom we have already mentioned, and who was become an excellent officer, and had merited this honour by his gallant behaviour during the sieges. His example served as an encouragement to all who have merit, without being distinguished by birth.

After this campaign of 1702, the czar resolved that Scheremetow, and the officers who had signalized themselves, should make a triumphal entry into Moscow. All the prisoners taken in this campaign marched in the train of the victors*, who had the Swedish colours and standards carried before them, together with the flag of the Swedish frigate taken on the lake Peipus. Peter assisted in the preparations for this triumphal pomp, as he had shared in the great actions it celebrated.

These shews naturally inspired emulation, otherwise they would have been no more than idle ostentation. Charles despised every thing of this kind, and, after the battle of Narva held his enemies, their efforts, and their triumphs, in equal contempt.

* Dec. 17. 1702.

C H A P. XIII.

Reformation at MOSCOW.

Further successes. Founding of Petersburg. The czar takes Narva, &c.

The year 1703.

THE short stay which the czar made at Moscow, in the beginning of the winter 1703, was employed in seeing all his new regulations put into execution, and in improving the civil as well as military government. Even his very amusements were calculated to inspire his subjects with a taste for the new manner of living he had introduced amongst them. In this view he invited all the boyars and principal ladies of Moscow, to the marriage of one of his sisters, at which every one was required to appear dressed after the ancient fashion. A dinner was served up just in the same manner as those in the 16th century *. By an old superstitious custom, no one was to light a fire on the wedding-day, even in the coldest season. This custom was rigorously observed upon this occasion. The Russians formerly never drank wine, but only mead and brandy; no other liquors were permitted on this day, and, when the guests made complaints, he replied, in a jocquing manner, "This was a custom with your ancestors, and old customs are always the best." This raillery contributed greatly to the reformation of those

* Taken from the journal of Peter the Great.

who preferred past times to the present, at least it put a stop to their murmurings ; and there are several nations that stand in need of the like example.

A still more useful establishment than any of the rest, was that of a printing press for Russian and Latin types, the implements of which were all brought from Holland. They began by printing translations in the Russian language of several books of morality and polite literature. Ferguson founded schools for geometry, astronomy, and navigation.

Another foundation, no less necessary, was that of a large hospital ; not one of those houses which encouraged idleness, and perpetuate the misery of the people, but such as the czar had seen at Amsterdam, where old persons and children are employed at work, and where every one within the walls are made useful in some way or other.

He established several manufactures ; and as soon as he had put in motion all those arts to which he gave birth in Moscow, he hastened to Veronitz, to give directions for building two ships of 80 guns, with long cradles or caserns fitted to the ribs of the vessel, to buoy her up, and carry her safely over the shoals and banks of sand that lay about Asoph. An ingenious contrivance, similar to that used by the Dutch in Holland ; to get their large ships over the Pampus.

Having made all the necessary preparations against the Turks, he turned his attention in the next place against the Swedes. He went to visit the ships that were building at Olonitz *, a town between the lakes Ladoga and Onega, where he had

* March 30. 1703.

established a foundary for making all kinds of arms; and where every thing bore a military aspect; as at Moscow flourished all the arts of peace. A spring of mineral waters, which has been lately discovered near Olionitz, has added to the reputation of that place. From thence he proceeded to Shlusselburg, which he fortified.

We have already observed, that Peter was determined to pass regularly through all the military degrees: he had served as lieutenant of bombardiers under prince Menzikoff, before that favourite was made governor of Shlusselburg, and now he took the rank of captain, and served under marshal Sheremetow.

There was an important fortress near the lake Ladoga and not far from the river Neva, named Nyantz or Nya. It was necessary to make himself master of this place, in order to secure his conquests, and favour his other designs. He therefore undertook to transport a number of small barks, filled with soldiers, and to drive off the Swedish vessels that were bringing supplies, while Sheremetow had the care of the trenches*. The citadel surrendered, and two Swedish vessels arrived too late to assist the besieged, being both attacked and taken by the czar. His journal says, that as a reward for his service, "The captain of bombardiers was created knight of the order of St. Andrew by admiral Golowin, the first knight of that order."

After the taking of the fort of Nya, he resolved upon building the city of Peterburg, at the mouth of the Neva, upon the gulph of Finland.

The affairs of king Augustus were in a desperate way. The excessive victories of the Swedes in

* May 2. 1703.

Poland had emboldened his enemies in the opposition, and even his friends had obliged him to dismiss a body of 20,000 Russians that the czar had sent him to reinforce his army. They thought by this sacrifice to deprive the malcontents of all pretext for joining the king of Sweden: but enemies are disarmed by force, a shew of weakness serving only to make them more insolent. These 20,000 men that had been disciplined by Patkul proved of infinite service in Livonia and Ingria, while Augustus was losing his dominions. This reinforcement, and above all the possession of Nya, enabled the czar to found his new capital.

It was in this barren and marshy spot of ground, which has communication with the main land only by one way, that Peter laid the foundation of Petersburg, in the 60th degree of latitude, and the 44th and an half of longitude. The ruins of some of the bastions of Nya were made use of for the first stones of the foundation †. They began by building a small fort upon one of the islands, which is now in the center of the city. The Swedes beheld, without apprehension, a settlement on the midst of a marsh, and inaccessible to vessels of burden; but in a very short time they saw the fortifications advanced, a town raised, and the little island of Cronstadt, situated over against it, changed in 1704 into an impregnable fortress, under the cannon of which even the largest fleets may ride in safety.

These works, which seemed to require a time of profound peace, were carried on in the very bosom of war. Workmen of every sort were called together from Moscow, Astracan, Casan, and the

† Petersburg was founded on Whitsunday the 27th May 1703.

Ukraine, to assist in building the new city. Neither the difficulties of the ground, that was to be rendered firm and raised, the distance of the necessary materials, the unforeseen obstacles which are for ever starting up in all great undertakings, nor, lastly, the epidemical disorder which carried off a prodigious number of the workmen, could discourage the Royal Founder: and, in the space of five months, a new city arose from the ground. It is true, indeed, it was little better than a cluster of huts, with only two brick houses surrounded by ramparts; but this was all that was then necessary. Time and perseverance accomplished the rest. In less than five months after the founding of Petersburg a Dutch ship came to trade there, the captain of which was handsomely rewarded *, and the Dutch soon found the way to Petersburg.

While Peter was directing the establishment of this colony, he took care to provide every day for its safety, by making himself master of the neighbouring posts. A Sweditl colonel, named Croniort, had taken post on the river Sestra, and thence threatened the rising city. Peter, without delay, marched against him with his two regiments of guards †, defeated him, and obliged him to repass the river. Having thus put his town in safety, he repaired to Olonitz, to give directions for building a number of small vessels, and afterwards returned to Petersburg ‡, on board a frigate that had been built by his direction, taking with him six transport vessels for present use, till the others could be got ready. Even at this juncture he did not forget his ally the king of Poland §, but sent him a reinforcement of 12,000 foot, and a sub-

* Nov. 1703.

† July 8.

‡ Sept.

§ Nov,

dy in money of 300,000 rubles, which make about 1,500,000 French livres ||. It has been remarked, that his annual revenue did not exceed then 5,000,000 rubles; a sum, which the expence of his fleets, of his armies, and of his new establishments, seemed more than sufficient to exhaust. He had, almost at one and the same time, fortified Novogorod, Pleskow, Kiow, Smolensko, Aisoph, Archangel, and founded a capital. Notwithstanding all which, he had still a sufficiency left to assist his ally with men and money. Cornelius le Bruin, a Dutchman, who was on his travels, and at that time in Russia, and with whom he frequently conversed very freely, as indeed he did with all strangers, says, that the czar himself assured him, that he had still 300,000 rubles remaining in his coffers, after all the expences of the war were defrayed.

In order to put his infant city of Petersburg out of danger of insult, he went in person to sound the depth of water thereabouts, fixed upon a place for building the fort of Cronstadt; and, after making the model of it in wood with his own hands, he employed prince Menzikoff to put it in execution. From thence he went to pass the winter at Moscow, in order to establish, by degrees, the several alterations he had made in the laws, manners and customs of Russia *. He regulated the finances, and put them upon a new footing. He expedited the works that were carrying on in the Veronitz, and Aisoph, and in an harbour which he had caused to be made on the Palus Maeotis, under the fort of Taganrook.

The Ottoman Porte † alarmed at these preparations, sent an embassy to the czar, complaining

|| About 60,000 l. Sterling. * Nov. 5. 1703. † Jan. 1704.

thereof: to which he returned for answer, that he was master in his own dominions, as well as the Grand Signior was in Turkey, and that it was no infringement of the peace, to render the Russian power respectable on the Euxine sea.

Upon his return to Petersburg ‡, finding his new citadel of Constrandt, which had been founded in the bosom of the sea, completely finished, he furnished it with the necessary artillery. But in order to settle himself firmly in Ingria, and entirely to repair the disgrace he had suffered before Narva, he esteemed it necessary to take that city. While he was making preparations for the siege, a small fleet appeared on the lake of Peipus, to oppose his designs. The Russian half galleys went out to meet them, gave them battle, and took the whole squadron, which had on board 98 pieces of cannon. After this victory, the czar laid siege to Narva both by sea and land, and which was most extraordinary, he lays siege to the city of Derpt in Estonia at the same time †.

Who would have imagined, that there was an university in Derpt? Gustavus Adolphus had founded one there, but it did not render that city more famous, Derpt being only known by these two sieges. Peter was incessantly going from one to the other, forwarding the attacks, and directing all the operations. The Swedish general Slippebac was in the neighbourhood of Derpt, with a body of 2500 men.

The besiegers expected every instant, when he would throw the succours into the place; but Peter, on this occasion, had recourse to a stratagem, worthy of more frequent imitation. He or-

dered two regiments of foot, and one of horse, to be clothed in the same uniform, and to carry the same standards and colours as the Swedes. These sham Swedes attack the trenches, and the Russians pretend to be put to flight; the garrison deceived by appearances, make a sally \ddagger ; upon which the mock combatants join their forces, and fall upon the Swedes, one half of whom were left dead upon the place, and the rest made shift to get back to the town. Slippembac arrives soon after with succours to relieve it, but is totally defeated. At length Derpt was obliged to capitulate, just as the czar was preparing every thing for a general assault \S .

At the same time, Peter met with a considerable check on the side of his new city of Petersburg; but this did not prevent him either from going on with the works of that place, or from vigorously prosecuting the siege of Narva. It has already been observed, that he sent a reinforcement of troops and money to king Augustus, when his enemies were driving him from his throne; but both these aids proved useless. The Russians having joined the Lithuanians in the interest of Augustus, were totally defeated in Courland by the Swedish general Lewenhaupt \parallel : and had the victors directed their efforts towards Livonia, Estonia, and Ingria, they might have destroyed the czar's new works, and baffled all the fruits of his great undertakings. Peter was every day sapping the breast-work of Sweden, while Charles seemed to neglect all resistance, for the pursuit of a less advantageous, though a more brilliant fame.

\ddagger June 27. 1704.

\S July 23.

\parallel July 31.

On the 12th of July 1704, only a single Swedish colonel, at the head of his detachment, obliged the Polish nobility to nominate a new king, on the field of election called Kolo, near the city of Warsaw. The cardinal, primate of the kingdom, and several bishops submitted to a Lutheran prince, notwithstanding the menaces and excommunications of the supreme pontiff. In short, every thing gave way to force. All the world knows in what manner Stanislaus Lerezinsky was elected king, and how Charles XII. obliged the greatest part of Poland to acknowledge him.

Peter, however, would not abandon the dethroned king, but redoubled his assistance, in proportion to the necessities of his ally; and while his enemy was making kings, he beat the Swedish generals one after another in Estonia and Ingria; from thence he passed to the siege of Narva, and gave several vigorous assaults to the town. There were three bastions, famous at least for their names called Victory, Honour, and Glory. The czar carried them all three sword-in-hand. The besiegers forced their way into the town, where they pillaged and exercised all those cruelties which were but too customary at that time, between the Swedes and Russians.

Peter, on this occasion *, gave an example that ought to have gained him the affections of all his new subjects. He ran every where in person, to put a stop to the pillage and slaughter, rescues several women out of the clutches of the brutal soldiery, and, after having, with his own hand, killed two of those russians, who had refused to obey his

* Aug, 20, 1704.

orders, he enters the town-house, whither the citizens had ran in crowds for shelter, and laying his sword yet reeking with blood upon the table, “ This sword, said he, is not stained with the blood of your fellow citizens, but with that of my own soldiers, which I have spilt to save your lives.”

C H A P. XIV.

PETER the GREAT keeps possession of all Ingria, while Charles XII. is triumphant in other places. Rise of Menzikoff. Petersburg secured. The czar executes his designs notwithstanding the victories of the king of Sweden *.

The years 1704 and 1705.

PETER being now master of all Ingria, conferred the government of that province upon Menzikoff; and at the same time gave him the title of prince, and the rank of major general. Pride and prejudice might in other countries, find means to gainsay, that a pastry cook’s boy should be raised to be a general and governor, and to princely dignity; but Peter had already accustomed his subjects to see, without surprise, everything given to merit, and nothing given to mere nobility. Menzikoff, by a lucky accident, had, while a boy, been taken from his original obscurity, and

* All the foregoing chapters, and likewise those which follow, are taken from the journals of Peter the Great, and the papers sent me from Petersburg, carefully compared with other memoirs.

placed in the czar's family †, where he learned several languages, and acquired a knowledge of public affairs, both in the cabinet and field; and having found means to ingratiate himself with his master, he afterwards knew how to render himself necessary. He greatly forwarded the works at Petersburg, of which he had the direction: several brick and stone-houses were already built, with an arsenal and magazines; the fortifications were completed, but the palaces were not built till some time afterwards.

Peter was scarcely settled in Narva, when he ordered fresh succours to the dethroned king of Poland. He promised him a body of troops over and above the 12,000 men he had already sent him

† Menzikoff's parents were vassals of the monastery of Cosmopoli: at the age of thirteen, he went to Moscow, and was taken into the service of a pastry-cook. His employment was singing ballads, and crying puff, and cakes about the streets. One day as he was following this occupation, the czar happening to hear him, and to be diverted with one of his songs, sent for him, and asked him if he would sell his pies and his basket? The boy answered, that his business was to sell his pies, but he must ask his master's leave to sell his basket; yet as every thing belonged to his prince, his majesty had only to lay his commands upon him. The czar was so pleased with his answer, that he immediately ordered him to court, where he gave him at first a mean employment: but being every day more pleased with his wit, he thought fit to place him about his person, and to make him groom of his bed chamber, from whence he gradually raised him to the highest preferments. He was tall and well shaped. At his first coming into the czar's service, he enlisted in Le Fort's company, and acquired under that general's instruction, such a degree of knowledge and skill, as enabled him to command armies, and to become one of the bravest and most successful generals in Russia.

and actually dispatched general Repnin *, from the frontiers of Lithuania, with six thousand horse and the same number of foot. All this while he did not lose sight of his colony of Petersburg. The buildings went on very fast ; his navy increased daily ; several ships and frigates were on the stocks at Olonitz : these he took care to see finished †, and brought them himself into the harbour of Petersburg.

Each time he returned to Moscow, was distinguished by triumphal entries. In this manner did he revisit it this year ‡ from whence he made only one excursion, to be present at the launching of his first ship of 80 guns upon the Veronitz, of which he himself had drawn the dimensions the preceding year.

As soon as the campaign could be opened in Poland, he hastened to the army §, which he had sent to the assistance of Augustus, on the frontiers of that kingdom ; but while he was thus supporting his ally, a Swedish fleet put to sea to destroy Petersburg, and the fortress of Cronslot, as yet hardly finished. This fleet consisted of 22 ships of war, from 54 to 64 guns each, besides six frigates, two bomb-ketches, and two fire-ships. The troops that were sent on this expedition, made a descent on the little island of Kotin ; but a Russian colonel, named Tolbogwin, who commanded a regiment there, ordered his soldiers to lie down flat on their bellies, while the Swedes were coming on shore || ; and then suddenly rising up, they threw in so brisk and well directed a fire, that the Swedes were put into confusion, and forc-

* Aug 19, 1704. † Oct. 11, ‡ Dec. 30. § May 1705.

|| June 27, 1705.

ed to retreat with the utmost precipitation to their ships, leaving behind them all their dead, and upwards of three hundred prisoners.

However, their fleet still continued hovering about the coast, and threatened Petersburg. They made another descent, and were repulsed as before; a body of land-forces were also advancing from Viborg, under the command of the Swedish general Meidel, and took their route by Shlusselburg †: this was the most considerable attempt that Charles had yet made upon those territories, which Peter had either conquered or new formed. The Swedes were repulsed, and Petersburg remained in security.

Peter, on the other hand, advanced towards Courland, with a design to penetrate as far as Riga. His plan was to make himself master of Livonia, while Charles XII. was busied in reducing the Poles entirely under the obedience of the new king he had given them. The czar was still at Wilna in Lithuania, and his general Scheremetow was approaching towards Mittau, the capital of Courland; but there he was met by general Lewenhaupt, already famous by several victories; and a pitched battle was fought between the two armies at a place called Gemaverthoff, or Gemavers.

In all those actions, where experience and discipline decide the day, the Swedes, though inferior in number, had the advantage. The Russians were totally defeated ‡, and lost all their artillery. Peter, notwithstanding the loss of three battles, viz. at Gemavers, at Jacobstadt, and at Narva, always retrieved his losses, and even converted them to his advantage.

† June 25.

‡ June 28.

After the battle of Gemavers, he marched his army into Courland; came before Mittau, made himself master of the town, and afterwards laid siege to the citadel, which he took by capitulation.

The Russian troops at that time had the character of distinguishing their successes §, by rapine and pillage; a custom of too great antiquity in all nations. But Peter, at the taking of Narva, had made such alterations in this custom, that the Russian soldiers, appointed to guard the vamps, where the grand dukes of Courland were buried, in the castle of Mittau, perceiving that the bodies had been taken out of their tombs, and some of their ornaments, refused to take possession of their post, till a Swedish colonel had been first sent for to inspect the condition of the place; who gave them a certificate that this outrage had been committed by the Swedes themselves.

A rumour which was spread throughout the whole empire, that the czar had been totally defeated at the battle of Gemavers, proved of greater prejudice to his affairs, than even the loss of that battle. The remainder of the ancient Strelitzes in garrison at Astracan, emboldened by this false report, mutinied, and murdered the governor of the town. Peter was obliged to send marshal Scheremetow, with a body of forces to quell the insurrection, and punish the mutineers.

Every thing seemed to conspire against the czar. The success and valour of Charles XII.; the misfortunes of Augustus; the forced neutrality of Denmark; the insurrection of the ancient Strelitzes; the murmurs of a people, sensible of the restraint, but not of the utility of the late reformation; the discontent of the grandees, who found

themselves subjected to military discipline; and lastly, the exhausted state of the finances, were sufficient to have disengaged any prince except Peter: but he did not despond even for an instant. He soon quelled the revolt and having provided for the safety of Ingria, and secured the possession of the citadel of Mittau, in spite of the victorious Lewenhaupt, who had not troops enough to oppose him; he found himself at liberty to march an army through Samogitia and Lithuania.

He now shared with Charles XII the glory of giving laws to Poland. He advanced as far as Tikoczin; where he had an interview for the second time with king Augustus; when he endeavoured to comfort him under his misfortunes, promising to revenge his cause, and at the same time made him a present of some colours, which Menzikoff had taken from the troops of his rival. The two monarchs afterwards went together to Grodno, the capital of Lithuania, where they staid till the 15th of December. At their parting, Peter presented him both men and money, and then, according to his usual custom, went to pass some part of the winter at Moscow *, to encourage the arts and sciences, and to enforce his new laws there, after having made a very difficult and laborious campaign.

* Dec. 30. 1705.

C H A P X V.

While Peter is strengthening his conquests, and improving the police of his dominions, his enemy Charles XII. gains several battles; gives laws to Poland and Saxony, and to Augustus, notwithstanding a victory gained by the Russians. Augustus resigns the crown, and delivers up Patkul the czar's ambassador. Murder of Patkul, who is sentenced to be broke upon the wheel.

The year 1706.

PETER was hardly returned to Moscow, when he heard that Charles XII. after being every where victorious, was advancing towards Grodno, to attack the Russian troops. King Augustus had been obliged to fly from Grodno, and retire with precipitation towards Saxony, with four regiments of Russian dragoons: a step which both weakened and discouraged the army of his protector. Peter found all the advances to Grodno occupied by the Swedes, and his troops dispersed.

While he was with the greatest difficulty assembling his troops in Lithuania the famous Schlemburg, who was the last support Augustus had left, and who afterwards gained so much glory by the defence of Corfou against the Turks, was advancing on the side of Great Poland, with about twelve thousand Saxons, and six thousand Russians, taken from the body of troops with which the czar had entrusted that unfortunate prince. Schlemburg expected with just reason, that he should be able to prop the sinking fortunes of Augustus; he perceived that Charles XII. was employed in Lith-

uania, and that there were only a body of ten thousand Swedes under general Renschild to interrupt his march. He therefore advanced with confidence as far as the frontiers of Silesia; which is the passage out of Saxony into upper Poland. When he came near the Village of Fraustadt, on the frontiers of that kingdom, he met marshal Renschild, who was advancing to give him battle.

Whatever care I take to avoid repeating what has been already mentioned in the history of Charles XII. I am obliged in this place to take notice once more, that there was in the Saxon army a French regiment, that had been taken prisoners at the famous battle of Hochstet, and obliged to serve in the Saxon troops. My memoirs say, that this regiment had the charge of the artillery, and adds that the French, struck with the fame and reputation of Charles XII. and discontented with the Saxon service, laid down their arms as soon as they came in sight of the enemy *, and desired to be taken into the Swedish army, in which they continued to the end of the war. This defection was as the beginning, or signal of a total overthrow to the Russian army, of which no more than three battalions were saved, and almost every man of these was wounded; and as no quarter was granted, the remainder was cut in pieces.

Norberg the chaplain pretends, that the Swedish word at this battle was, "In the name of God." and that of the Russians, "Kill all;" but it was the Swedes who killed all in the name of God. The czar himself declares in one of his manifestoes †, that a number of Russian Cossacks, and

* Feb. 6. 1706. † The czar's manifesto in the Ukraine 1709.

Calmucks, that had been made prisoners, were murdered in cool blood three days after that battle. The irregular troops on both sides had accustomed their generals to these cruelties, than which greater were never committed in the most barbarous times. I had the honour to hear king Stanislaus himself say, that in one of those engagements, which were so frequent in Poland, a Russian officer, who had been formerly one of his friends, came to put himself under his protection, after the defeat of the corps he commanded; and that the Swedish general Steinbok shot him dead with a pistol, while he held him in his arms.

This was the fourth battle the Russians had lost against the Swedes, without reckoning the other victories of Charles XII. in Poland. The czar's troops that were in Grodno, ran a risk of suffering a still more disgrace, by being surrounded on all sides; but he fortunately found means to get them together, and even to strengthen them with new reinforcements. But necessitated at once to provide for the safety of this army, and the security of his conquests in Ingria, he ordered prince Menzikoff to march with the army under his command eastward, and from thence southward as far as Kiow.

While his men were upon their march, he repaires to Shlusselburg, from thence to Narva, and to his colony of Petersburg *, and puts those places in a posture of defence. From the Baltic he flies to the banks of the Boristhenes, to enter into Poland by the way of Kiow, making it still his chief care to render those victories of Charles, which he had not been able to prevent, of as little advantage to the victor as possible. At this very

* Aug. 1706.

time he meditated a new conquest ; namely that Wiburg, the capital of Carelia, situated on the gulph of Finland. He went in season to lay siege to this place, but for this time it withstood the power of his arms * ; succours arrived in season, and he was obliged to raise the siege. His rival Charles XII. did not in fact make any conquests, though he gained so many battles : he was at that time in pursuit of king Augustus in Saxony, being always more intent upon humbling that prince, and crushing him beneath the weight of his superior power and reputation, than upon recovering Ingria that had been wrested upon him by a vanquished enemy.

He spread terror through all Upper Poland, Silesia, and Saxony. King Augustus's whole family, his mother, his wife, his son, and the principal nobility of the country, were retired into the heart of the empire. Augustus now sued for peace, chusing rather to trust himself to the mercy of his conqueror, than in the arms of his protector. He entered into a treaty which deprived him of the crown of Poland, and covered him at the same time with ignominy. This was a private treaty, and was to be concealed from the czar's generals, with whom he had taken refuge in Poland, while Charles XII. was giving laws in Leipsic, and acting as absolute master throughout his electorate.

His plenipotentiaries had already signed a fatal treaty, by which he not only divested himself of the crown of Poland, but promised never more to assume the title of king † ; at the same time he recognized Stanislaus, recounced his alliance with the czar his benefactor, and, to compleat his bu-

* Oct. 1706.

† Sept. 14. 1706.

miliation, engaged to deliver up to Charles XII. John Renold Patkul, the czar's ambassador and general in the Russian service, who was then actually fighting his cause. He had sometime before ordered Patkul to be arrested upon false suspicions, contrary to the law of nations; and now in direct violation of these laws, he delivered him up to his enemy. It had been better for him to have died sword-in-hand, than to have concluded such a treaty: a treaty, which not only robbed him of his crown, and of his reputation; but likewise endangered his liberty, because he was at that time in the power of prince Menzikoff in Posnania, and the few Saxons that he had with him were paid by the Russians.

Prince Menzikoff was opposed in that district by a Swedish army, reinforced with a strong party of Poles, in the interest of the new king Stanislaus under the command of general Maderfeld; and not knowing that Augustus had engaged in a treaty with the enemies of Russia, had proposed to attack them; and Augustus did not dare to refuse. The battle was fought near Kalith, in the palatinate belonging to Stanislaus †. This was the first pitched battle the Russians had gained against the Swedes. Prince Menzikoff had all the glory of the action; four thousand of the enemy were left dead on the field, and 2598 were made prisoners.

It is difficult to comprehend how Augustus could be prevailed on, after this battle, to ratify a treaty which deprived him of all the fruits of his victory. But Charles was triumphant in Saxony, where his name spread terror. The success of the Russians appeared so inconsiderable, and the

† Oct. 19.

Polish party against Augustus was so ill-advised, that he signed that fatal convention. Neither did he stop here: he wrote to his envoy Finkitein a letter, that was if possible more shameful than the treaty itself; for therein he asked pardon for having obtained a victory, "protesting, that the battle had been fought against his will; that the Russians, and the Poles his adherents, had obliged him to it; that he had, with a view of preventing it, actually made some movements to abandon Menzikoff; that Maderfeld might have beaten him, had he had made the most of that opportunity; that he was ready to restore all the Swedish prisoners, or to break with the Russians; and that, in fine, he would give the king of Sweden all possible satisfaction," for having dared to beat his troops.

This whole affair, unparalleled and inconceivable as it is, is nevertheless strictly true. When we reflect that, with all this weakness, Augustus was one of the bravest princes in Europe; we may plainly perceive, that the lots or preservation, the rise or decline of empires, are entirely owing to fortitude of mind.

Two other circumstances concurred to compleat the disgrace of the king of Poland elector of Saxony, and heighten the abuse which Charles XII. made of his good fortune. The first was his obliging Augustus to write a letter of congratulation to the new king Stanislaus: the second was terrible; he even compelled Augustus to deliver up Patkul, the czar's ambassador and general. It is sufficiently known to all Europe, that this minister was afterwards broke alive upon the wheel at Casimir in the month of September 1707. Norberg the chaplain confesses that the orders for his execution were all written in Charles's own hand.

There is not a civilian in all Europe, nay even the vilest slave, but must feel the whole horror of this barbarous injustice. The first crime of this unfortunate man was, his having made an humble representation of the rights and privileges of his country, at the head of six Livonian gentlemen, who were sent as deputies from the whole province: he was condemned to die for fulfilling the first of duties, that of serving his country agreeable to her laws. This iniquitous sentence put him in full possession of a right, which all mankind derive from nature, that of chusing his country. Being made afterwrds ambassador to one of the greatest monarchs in the universe, his person thereby became sacred. On this occasion, the law of force violated that of nature and nations. In former ages cruelties of this kind were hidden in the blaze of success, but now they fully the glory of a conqueror.

C H A P. XVI.

Attempts made to set up a third king of Poland. Charles XII. sets out from Saxony with a powerful army, and marches through Poland in a victorious manner. Cruelties committed. Conduct of the czar. Successes of the king of Sweden, who at length advances towards Russia.

The years 1707 and 1708.

CHARLES XII. enjoyed the fruits of his good fortune in Altranstadt near Leipzig, whither the protestant princes of the German empire repaired in droves to pay homage to him, and implore his protection. He received ambassadors from almost all the potentates of Europe. The emperor Joseph implicitly followed his directions. Peter then perceiving that king Augustus had renounced his protection and his own crown, and that a part of the Polish nation had acknowledged Stanislaus, listened to the proposals made him by Yolkova of chusing a third king.

A diet was held at Dublin, in which several of the palatines were proposed; and among others, prince Ragotski was put upon the list; that prince, who was so long kept in prison when young by the emperor Leopold, and who after, when he procured his liberty, was his competitor for the throne of Hungary.

This negotiation was pushed very far, and Poland was on the point of having three kings at one time. Prince Ragotski not succeeding, Peter thought to bestow the crown on Stanislaus, grand general of the republic; a person of great power

and interest, and head of a third party, that would neither acknowlege the dethroned king, nor the person elected by the opposite party.

In the midst of these troubles, there was a talk of peace, as is customary on the like occasions. Besieval the French envoy in Saxony interposed, in order to bring about a reconciliation between the czar and the king of Sweden. It was thought at that time by the court of France, that Charles, having no longer either the Russians or Poles to fight against, might turn his arms against the emperor Joseph, with whom he was not on very good terms, and on whom he had even imposed several laws during his stay in Saxony. But Charles made answer, that he would treat with the czar in Moscow. It was on this occasion that Peter said, " My brother Charles w^{nts} to act the Alexander, but he shall not find a Darius in me."

The Russians however were still in Poland, and were in the city of Warsaw, while the king whom Charles XII. had set over the Poles was hardly acknowledged by that nation. In the mean time, Charles was enriching his army with the spoils of Saxony.

At length he began his march from Altranstadt *, at the head of an army of 45,000 men; a force which it seemed impossible for the czar to withstand, seeing he had been entirely defeated by 8,000 only at Narva.

It was in passing by the walls of Dresden †, that Charles made that very extraordinary visit to king Augustus, which as Norberg says, " will strike posterity with admiration." It was running an accountable risk, to put himself in the power of a

* Aug. 22. 1707.

† Aug 27.

prince whom he had deprived of his kingdom. From whence he continued his march through Silesia, and re-entered Poland.

This country had been entirely ravaged by war, ruined by factions, and was a prey to every kind of calamity. Charles continued advancing with his army through the province of Nossavia, and chose the most difficult ways he could take. The inhabitants, who had taken shelter in the morasses, resolved to make him at least pay for his passage. Six thousand peasants dispatched an old man of their body to speak to him; this man, who was of a very extraordinary figure, clad in white, and armed with two carbines, made a speech to Charles; but as the standers-by did not very well understand what he said, they, without further ceremony, dispatched him in the midst of his harangue, and before the king's face. The peasants, in a rage, immediately withdrew, and took up arms. All who could be found, were seized, and obliged to hang one another; the last was compelled to put the rope about his neck himself, and to be his own executioner. All their houses were burnt to the ground. This fact is attested by Norberg, who was an eye-witness, and therefore cannot be contradicted, as it cannot be related without inspiring horror.

Charles being arrived within a few leagues of Grodno in Lithuania*, is informed of the czar's being there in person with a body of troops; upon which, without staying to deliberate, he takes only 800 of his guards, and sets out for Grodno. A German officer, named Mulfels, who commanded

* Feb. 6. 1708.

a body of troops, posted at one of the gates of the town, making no doubt when he saw Charles, but that he was followed by his whole army, instead of disputing the passage with him, leaves it open, and takes to flight. The alarm is now spread through the whole town; every one imagines the whole Swedish army already entered; the few Russians who made any resistance, are cut in pieces by the Swedish guards; and all the officers assure the czar, that the victorious army had made itself master of the place. Hereupon Peter retreats behind the ramparts, and Charles plants a guard of thirty men, at the very gate through which the czar had just before entered.

In this confusion, some of the Jesuits, whose college had been taken to accommodate the king of Sweden, as being the handsomest structure in the place, went by night to the czar, and for this time told the whole truth. Upon this, Peter returns into the town, and forces the Swedish guards. An engagement ensues in the streets and public places; but, at length, the whole Swedish army appearing in sight, the czar is obliged to yield to superior numbers, and leaves the town in the hands of the victor, who made all Poland tremble.

Charles had augmented his forces in Livonia and Finland, and Peter had every thing to fear, not only for his conquests on this side, together with those in Lithuania, but also for his ancient territories, and even for the city of Moscow itself. He was obliged then to provide at once for the safety of all these different places, at such a distance from each other. Charles could not make any rapid conquests to the eastward of Lithuania in the depth of winter, and in a marshy country,

subject to epidemical disorders, which had been spread by poverty and famine from Warsaw as far as Minski. Peter posted his troops so as to command the passes of the rivers, guarded all the important posts, and did every thing in his power to impede the marches of his enemy *, and afterwards hastened to put things in a proper situation at Petersburg.

Though Charles was lording it in Poland, he took nothing from the czar; but Peter, by the use he made of his new fleet, by landing his forces in Finland, by the taking and dismantling the town of Borgau, and by seizing a great booty †, was procuring many great and real advantages to himself and distressing his enemy.

Charles, after being detained a long time in Lithuania by continual rains, at length reached the little river of Berezine, some few leagues from the Boristhenes. Nothing could withstand his activity; he threw a bridge over the river in sight of the Russians; beat a detachment that guarded the passage, and got to Holozin on the river Bibitsch, where the czar had posted a considerable body of troops to check the impetuous progress of his rival. The little river of Bibitsch is only a small brook in dry weather; but at this time it was swollen by the rains to a deep and rapid stream. On the other side was a morass, behind which the Russians had thrown up an intrenchment for above a quarter of a league, defended by a large and deep ditch, and covered by a parapet, lined with artillery. Nine regiments of horse, and eleven of foot, were advantageously posted in these lines, so that the passage of the river seemed impracticable.

* April 8. 1708. † May 22.

The Swedes, according to the custom of war, got ready their pontons, and erected batteries to favour their passage; but Charles, whose impatience to engage would not let him brook the least delay, did not wait till the pontons were ready. Marshal Schwerin, who served a long time under him, has assured me several times, that one day that they were to come to action, observing his generals to be very busy in concerting the necessary dispositions, said tartly to them. "When will you have done with this trifling?" and immediately advanced in person at the head of his guards, which he did particularly on this memorable day.

He flung himself into the river, followed by his regiment of guards. Their numbers broke the impetuosity of the current, but the water was as high as their shoulders, and they could make no use of their firelocks. Had the artillery of the parapet been but tolerably well served, or had the infantry but levelled their pieces in a proper manner, not a single Swede would have escaped.

The king, after wading the river *, passed the morass on foot. As soon as the army had surmounted these obstacles within sight of the Russians, they drew up in order of battle, and attacked the enemies entrenchments seven different times, and it was not till the seventh attack that the Russians gave way. By the accounts of their own historians, the Swedes took but 12 field-pieces, and 24 mortars.

It was therefore evident, that the czar had at length succeeded in disciplining his troops, and this victory of Holozin, while it covered Charles XII. with glory, might have made him him sensi-

* July 25. 1708.

ble of the many dangers he must have to encounter in adventuring into such distant countries, where his army could only march in small bodies, thro' woods, morasses, and where he would be obliged to fight out every step of his way ; but the Swedes, being accustomed to carry all before them, dreaded neither danger nor fatigue.

C H A P. XVII.

CHARLES XII. crosses the Boristhenes, penetrates into the Ukraine, but concerta his measures badly. One of his armies is defeated by PETER the GREAT : he loses his supply of provitions and ammunition : advances forward through a desert country. His adventures on the Ukraine.

The year 1708.

AT last Charles arrives on the borders of the Boristhenes, at a small town called Mohilow. This was the important spot where he was determined, whether he should direct his march eastward towards Moscow, or southward towards the Ukraine. His own army, his friends, his enemies, all expected that he would direct his course immediately for the capital of Russia. Which ever way he took, Peter was following him from Smolensko with a strong army. No one expected that he would turn towards the Ukraine. He was induced to take this strange resolution by Mazeppa, hetman of the Cossacks, who being an old man of seventy, and without children, ought to have thought only of ending his days in peace : gratitude should have bound him to the czar, to whom

he was indebted for present dignity; but whether he had any real cause of complaint against that prince, or that he was dazzled with the lustre of Charles's exploits or whether, in time, he thought to make himself independent, he betrayed his benefactor, and privately espoused the interests of the king of Sweden, flattering himself with the hopes of engaging his whole nation in rebellion with himself.

Charles made not the least doubt of subduing the Russian empire, as soon as his troops should be joined by so warlike a people as the Cossacks. Mazeppa was to furnish him with what provisions, ammunition, and artillery he should want. Besides these powerful succours, he was to be joined by an army of 16 or 17000 men out of Livonia, under the command of general Lewenhaupt, who was to bring with him a prodigious quantity of warlike stores and provisions. Charles was not at the trouble of reflecting, whether the czar was within reach of attacking his army, and depriving him of these necessary supplies. He never informed himself whether Mazeppa was in a condition to observe his promises; if that Cossack had credit enough to change the disposition of a whole nation, who are generally guided only by their own opinion; or whether his army was provided with sufficient resources in case of an accident; but imagined, if Mazeppa should prove deficient in abilities or fidelity, he could trust to his own valour and good fortune. The Swedish army then advanced beyond the Boristhenes towards the Desna: it was between these two rivers, that he expected to meet with Mazeppa. His march was attended with many difficulties and dangers, on account of the badness of the road and the many parties of Russians that were hovering about these regions.

Menzikoff, at the head of some horse and foot *, attacked the king's advanced guard, threw them into disorder, and killed a number of his men. He lost a greater number of his own, indeed, but that did not discourage him. Charles immediately hastened to the field of battle, and with some difficulty repulsed the Russians, at the hazard of his own life, by engaging a party of dragoons, by whom he was surrounded. All this while Mazepa did not appear, and provisions began to grow scarce. The Swedish soldiers, seeing their king share in all their dangers, fatigues, and wants, were not dispirited; but though they admired his courage, they could not refrain from murmuring at his conduct.

The orders which the king had sent to Lewenhaupt to march forward with all haste, to join him with the necessary supplies, were not delivered by twelve days so soon as they should have been. This was a long delay as circumstances then stood. However, Lewenhaupt at length began his march. Peter suffered him to pass the Boristhenes; but as soon as his army was got between that river and the lesser ones, which empty themselves into it, he crossed over after him, and attacked him with his united forces, which had followed in different corps at equal distances from one another. This battle was fought between the Boristhenes and the Soffa †.

Prince Menzikoff was upon his return with the same body of horse, with which he had lately engaged Charles XII. General Batur followed him, and the czar himself headed the flower of his army. The Swedes imagined they had to deal with an

* Sept 11. 1708. † In the Russian language Socza.

army of 40,000 men, and the same was believed for a long time on the faith of their relation: but my late memoirs inform me, that Peter had only 20,000 men in this day's engagement, a number not much superior to that of the enemy: but his vigour, his patience, his unwearied perseverance, together with that of his troops, animated by his presence, decided the fate, not of that day only, but of the three successive days, during which the fight was renewed at different times.

They made their first attack upon the rear of the Swedish army, near the village of Lefnau, from whence this battle borrows its name. This first shock was bloody, without proving decisive. Lewenhaupt retreated into a wood, and thereby saved his baggage. The next morning, when the Swedes were to be driven from the wood, the fight was still more bloody, and more to the advantage of the Russians. Here it was that the czar, seeing his troops in disorder, cried out to fire upon the runaways, and even upon himself, if they saw him turn back. The Swedes were repulsed, but not thrown into confusion.

At length a reinforcement of 4000 dragoons arriving, he fell upon the Swedes a third time, who retreated to a small town called Prospock, where they were again attacked; they then marched towards the Defna, the Russians still pursuing them; yet they were never broken, but lost upwards of 8000 men, 17 pieces of cannon, and 44 colours: the czar took 55 officers, and near 900 private men prisoners, and the great convoy of provisions and ammunition that were going to Charles's army, fell into the hands of the conqueror.

† Oct. 8. 1708.

This was the first time that the czar in person gained a pitched battle against an enemy who had distinguished himself by so many victories over his troops : he was employed in a general thanksgiving for his success, when he received advice, that general Apraxin had lately gained an advantage over the enemy in Ingria*, some leagues from Narva, an advantage less considerable indeed than that of Lesnau ; but this concurrence or fortunate events greatly raised the hopes and courage of his troops.

Charles XII. heard of these unfortunate tidings, just as he was ready to pass the Desna in the Ukraine. Mazeppa at length joined him ; but instead of 20,000 men, and an immense quantity of provisions, which he was to have brought with him, he came with only two regiments, and appeared rather like a fugitive applying for assistance, than a prince, who was bringing powerful succours to his ally. This Cossack had indeed begun his march with near sixteen thousand of his people, whom he had told at their first setting out, that they were going against the king of Sweden, that they would have the glory of stopping that hero on his march, and that he would hold himself eternally obliged to them for so great a service.

But when they came within a few leagues of the Desna, he made them acquainted with his real design. These brave people received his declaration with disdain : they refused to betray a monarch, against whom they had no cause of complaint, for the sake of a Swede, who had invaded their country, with an armed force, and who, after leaving it, would be no longer able to defend them, but must abandon them to the mercy of the

* Sept. 17. 1708.

incensed Russians, and of the Poles, once their masters, and always their enemies: they accordingly returned home, and gave advice to the czar of the defection of their chief. Mazeppa found himself left with only two regiments, the officers of which were in his own pay.

He was still master of some strong posts in the Ukraine, and in particular of Bathurin, the place of his residence, looked upon as the capital of the country of the Cossacks: it is situated near some forests on the Desna, at a great distance from the place where Peter had defeated general Lewenhaupt. There were always some Russian regiments quartered in the districts. Prince Menzikoff was detached from the czar's army, and got thither by round-about marches. Charles could not secure all the passes; he did not even know them all, and had neglected to make himself master of the important post of the Starowdoub, which leads directly to Bathurin, across seven or eight leagues of forest, through which the Desna directs its course. His enemy had always the advantage of him, by being better acquainted with the country.

Menzikoff and the prince Galitzin, who had accompanied him, easily made their passage good *, and presented themselves before the town of Bathurin, which surrendered almost without resistance, was plundered and reduced to ashes. The Russians made themselves master of a large magazine destined for the use of the king of Sweden, and of all Mazeppa's treasures. The Cossacks chose another Hetman, named Skoropasky, who was approved by the czar, who being willing to impress a due sense of the enormous crime of the treason on the minds of the people, by a striking ex-

* Nov. 14. 1708.

ample of justice, the archbishop of Kiow †, and two other prelates, were ordered to excommunicate Mazeppa publicly; after which he was hanged in effigy, and some of his accomplices were broken upon the wheel.

In the mean while, Charles XII still at the head of about 25 or 27,000 Swedes, who were reinforced by the remains of Lewenhaupt's army, and the addition of between 2 and 3000 men, whom Mazeppa had brought with him, and still infatuated with same notion of making all the Ukraine declare for him, passed the Desna ‡, at some distance from Bathurin, and near the Borithenes, in spite of the czar's troops which surrounded him on all sides; part of whom followed close in the rear, while another part lined the opposite side of the river to oppose his passage.

He continued his march through a desert country where he met with nothing but burned and ruined villages. The cold began to set in at the beginning of December so extremely sharp, that in one of his marches, near 2000 of his men perished before his eyes: the czar's troops did not suffer so much, being better supplied; whereas the king of Sweden's army, being almost naked, was necessarily more exposed to the inclemency of the weather.

In this deplorable situation, count Piper, chancellor of Sweden, who never gave his master other than good advice, conjured him to halt, and pass at least the severest part of the winter, in a small town of the Ukraine, called Romna, where he might entrench himself, and get some provisions by the help of Mazeppa; but Charles replied that "he

† Nov. 22. ‡ Nov. 15. 1708.

was not a person to shut himself up in a town." Piper then intreated him to repass the Desna and the Boriithenes, to return back into Poland, to put his troops into winter-quarters, of which they stood so much in need, to make use of the Polish cavalry, which was absolutely necessary; to support the king he had nominated, and to keep in awe the partisans of Augustus, who began already to bestir themselves. Charles answered him again. "that this would be flying before the czar, that the season would grow milder, and that he must reduce the Ukraine, and march on to Moscow."

Both armies remained some weeks inactive, on account of the cold, in the month of January 1709; but, as soon as the men were able to make use of their arms, Charles attacked all the small posts that he found in his way. He was obliged to send parties on every side in search of provisions; that is to say, to scour the country twenty leagues round, and rob all the peasants of their necessary subsistence. Peter, without hurrying himself, kept a strict eye upon all his motions, and suffered the Swedish army to dwindle away by degrees.

It is impossible for the reader to follow the Swedes in their march through these countries; several of the rivers which they crossed are not to be found in the maps: we must not suppose, that geographers are as well acquainted with these countries, as we are with Italy, France, and Germany. Geography, of all the arts, that which still stands the most in need of improvement; and ambition has hitherto been at more pains to desolate the face of the globe, than to give a description of it.

We must content ourselves then with knowing, that Charles traversed the whole Ukraine in the

month of February, burning the villages wherever he came, or meeting with others that had been laid in ashes by the Russians. He advancing south-east, came to these sandy deserts, bordered by mountains that separate the Nogay Tartars from the Cossacks. To the eastward of these mountains, are the altars of Alexander. Charles was now on the other side of the Ukraine, in the road that the Tartars take to Russia; and when he was got there, he was obliged to return back again to procure subsistence; the inhabitants, having retired with all their cattle into their dens and lurking places, would sometimes defend their subsistence against the soldiers, who came to deprive them of it. Such of these poor wretches who could be found, were put to death, agreeable to what are falsely called the rules of war. I cannot here forbear transcribing a few lines from Norberg. "As an instance, says he, of the king's regard to justice, I shall insert a note, which he wrote with his own hand to colonel Heilmen."

"Colonel,

"I am very well pleased that you have taken these peasants, who carried off a Swedish soldier. As soon as they are convicted of the crime, let them be punished with death, according to the exigency of the case.

CHARLES, and lower down, RUDIS."

Such are the sentiments of justice and humanity shewn by a king's confessor; but had the peasants of the Ukraine had it in their power to hang up some of those regimented peasants of East Gothland, who thought themselves intitled to come so far to plunder them, their wives, and families, of their subsistence, would not the confessors and chaplains of these Ukrainers have had equal reason to applaud their justice?

Mazeppa had, for a considerable time, been in treaty with the Zaporavians who dwell about the two shores of the Boristhenes, and of whom part inhabit the islands on that river. It is this division that forms the nation, of whom mention has already been made in the first chapter of this history, and who have neither wives nor families, and subsist entirely by rapine. During the winter they heap up provisions in their islands, which they afterwards go and sell in the summer, in the little town of Pultowa; the rest dwell in small hamlets, to the right and left of this river. All, together, they chuse a particular Hetman, and this Hetman is subordinate to him of the Ukraine. The person at that time, at the head of the Zaporavians, came to meet Mazeppa; and these two barbarians had an interview, at which each of them had an horte's tail, and a club born before him, as ensigns of honour.

To shew what this Hetman of the Zaporavians, and his people were, I think it not unworthy of history, to relate the manner in which this treaty concluded. Mazeppa gave a great feast to the Hetman of the Zaporavians, and his principal officers, who were all served in plate. As soon as these chiefs had made themselves drunk with brandy, they took an oath (without stirring from the table) upon the evangelists, to supply Charles with men and provisions; after which they carried off all the plate and other table-furniture. Mazeppa's steward ran after them, and remonstrated, that such behaviour ill-suited with the doctrine of the gospels on which they had so lately sworn. Some of Mazeppa's domestics were for taking the plate away by force; but the Zaporavians went in a body to complain to Mazeppa, of the unparalleled affront offered to such brave fellows, and demand-

ed to have the steward delivered up to them, that they might punish him according to law. This was accordingly complied with, and the Zaporavians, according to law, tossed this poor man from one to another like a ball, and afterwards plunged a knite to his heart.

Such were the new allies that Charles XII. was obliged to receive, part of whom he formed into a regiment of 2000 men; the remainder marched in separate bodies against the Cossacks and Calmucks of the czar's party, that were stationed about that district.

The little town of Pultowa, with which those Zaporavians carry on a trade, was filled with provisions, and might have served Charles for a place of arms. It is situated on the river Worsklaw, near a chain of mountains, which command it on the north side. To the eastward is a vast desert. The western part is the most fruitful, and the best peopled. The Worsklaw empties itself into the Borinhene, about fifteen leagues lower down. From Pultowa, one may go northward, through the defiles which communicate with the road to Moscow, a passage used by the Tartars. It is very difficult of access, and the precautions taken by the czar had rendered it almost impervious; but nothing appeared impossible to Charles, and he depended upon marching to Moscow, as soon as he had made himself master of Pultowa. With this view he laid siege to that town in the beginning of May.

C H A P. XVIII.

Battle of PULTOWA.

The year 1709.

HERE it was that Peter expected him. He had disposed the several divisions of his army at convenient distances for joining each other, and marching all together against the besiegers: he had visited the countries which surround the Ukraine; namely, the duchy of Seversia, watered by the Desna, already made famous by his victory; the country of Bolcho, in which the Occa has its source; the deserts and mountains leading to the Palus Maeotis; and lately he had been in the neighbourhood of Asoph, where he caused that harbour to be cleansed, new ships to be built, and the citadel of Taganroc to be repaired. Thus did he employ the time that passed between the battles of Lefnau and Pultowa, in preparing for the defence of his dominions. As soon as he heard the Swedes had laid siege to the town, he mustered all his forces: the horse, dragoons, infantry, Cossacks, and Calmucks, advanced from different quarters. His army was well provided with necessaries of every kind; large cannon, field-pieces, ammunition of all sorts, provisions, and even medicines for the sick: this was another degree of superiority which he had acquired over his rival.

On the 15th day of June 1709, he appeared before Pultowa with an army of about 60,000 effective men. The river Worsklaw was between him and Charles. The besiegers were encamped on the north west side of that river, the Russians on the south-east.

Peter ascends the river above the town, fixes the barges, marches over with his army, and draws a long line of entrenchments *, which were begun and compleated in one night in the face of the enemy. Charles might then judge, whether the person whom he so much despised, and whom he thought of dethroning at Moscow, understood the art of war. This disposition being made, Peter posted his cavalry between two woods, and covered it with several redoubts, lined with artillery. Having thus taken all the necessary measures, he went to reconnoitre the enemy's camp in order to form the attack †.

This battle was to decide the fate of Russia, Poland, and Sweden, and of two monarchs, on whom the eyes of all Europe were fixed. The greatest part of those nations who were attentive to these important concerns, were equally ignorant of the place where these two princes were, and of their situation : but knowing that Charles XII. had set out from Saxony, at the head of a victorious army, and that he was driving his enemy every where before him, they no longer doubted that he would at length entirely crush him ; and that as he had already given laws to Denmark, Poland, and Germany, he would dictate conditions of peace in the Kremlin of Moscow, and make a new czar, after having already made a new king of Poland. I have seen letters from several public ministers to their respective courts, confirming this general opinion.

The risk was far from being equal between these two great rivals. If Charles lost a life, which he had so often, and wantonly exposed, there would after all have been but one hero less in the world.

* June 3. 1709. † July 6. 1709.

The provinces of the Ukraine, the frontiers of Lithuania and of Russia, would then rest from their calamities, and a stop would be put to the general devastation, which had so long been their scourge. Poland would, together with her tranquillity, recover her lawful prince, who had been lately reconciled to the czar his benefactor; and lastly, Sweden, though exhausted of men and money, might find motives of consolation under her heavy losses.

But if the czar perished, those immense labours which had been of such utility to mankind, would be buried with him, and the most extensive empire in the world would again relapse into the chaos from whence it had been so lately taken.

There had already been some skirmishes between the detached parties of Swedes and Russians, under the walls of the town. In one of these encounters, Charles had been wounded by a musket-ball*, which had shattered the bones of his foot. He underwent several painful operations, which he bore with his usual fortitude, and had been confined to his bed for some days. In this condition he was informed, that Peter intended to give him battle. His notions of honour would not suffer him to wait to be attacked in his entrenchments: accordingly he gave orders for quitting them, and was carried himself in a litter. Peter the Great acknowledges, that the Swedes attacked the redoubts, lined with artillery, that covered his cavalry, with such obstinate valour, that, notwithstanding the strongest resistance, supported by a continual fire, the enemy made themselves masters of two redoubts, some writers say, that

* June 27. 1709.

when the Swedish infantry found themselves in possession of the two redoubts, they thought the day their own, and began to cry out Victory. The chaplain Norberg, who was at some great distance from the field of battle, amongst the baggage, which was indeed his proper place, pretends, that this was a calumny; but whether the Swedes cried out victory or not, it is certain they were not victorious. The fire from the other redoubts was kept up without ceasing, and the resistance made by the Russians on every part, was as firm as the attack of their enemies was vigorous. They did not make one irregular movement; the czar drew up his army without the entrenchments in excellent order, and with surprising dispatch.

The battle now became general. Peter acted as major-general; Baur commanded the right wing, Menzikoff the left, and Shereemetow the centre. The action lasted two hours: Charles with a pistol in his hand went from rank to rank, carried in a litter, on the shoulders of his drabans; one of which was killed by a cannon-ball, and at the same time the litter was shattered in pieces. He then ordered his men to carry him upon their pikes; for it would have been difficult in so smart an action, let Norberg say as he pleases, to find a fresh litter ready made. Peter received several shot through his cloaths and his hat; both princes were continually in the midst of the fire, during the whole action. At length, after two hours desperate engagement, the Swedes were taken on all sides, and fell into confusion, so that Charles was obliged to fly before him, whom he had hitherto held in so much contempt. This very hero, who could not mount his saddle during the battle, now fled for his life on horse-back; necessity lent him

strength in his retreat; he suffered the most excruciating pain, which was increased by the mortifying reflection of being vanquished without resource. The Russians reckoned 9224 Swedes left dead on the field of battle, and between two and three thousand made prisoners in the action, the chief of which was cavalry.

Charles XII. fled with the greatest precipitation, attended only by 14,000 men, a few field pieces, and a very small quantity of provisions and ammunition. He directed his march southward, towards the Boristhenes, between the two rivers Worskla and Sol*, in the country of the Zaporavians. Beyond the Boristhenes, are vast deserts, which lead to the frontiers of Turkey. Norberg affirms, that the victors durst not pursue Charles; and yet he acknowledges, that prince Menzikoff appeared on the neighbouring heights, with 10,000 horse, and a considerable train of artillery §, while the king was passing the Boristhenes.

Fourteen thousand Swedes surrendered themselves prisoners of war to these 10,000 Russians; and Lewenhaupt, who commanded them, signed the fatal capitulation, by which he gave up those Zaporavians who engaged in the service of his master, and were then in the fugitive army. The chief persons taken prisoners in the battle, and by the capitulation, were count Piper, the first minister, with two secretaries of state, and two of the cabinet, field-marshal Renschild, the generals Lewenhaupt, Shlippenbach, Rozen, Stakelber, Creutz, and Hamilton, and three general aid-de-camps, the auditor general of the army, fifty-nine staff officers, five colonels, among whom was the prince

* Or Psol.

§ July 12. 1709.

of Wirtemburg, 16,941 private men and non-commissioned officers; in short, reckoning the king's own domestics, and others, the conqueror had no less than 18,746 prisoners in his power; to whom, if we add 9224 slain in battle, and near 2000 men that passed the Boristhenes with Charles, it appears plainly, that he had, on that memorable day, no less than 27,000 effective men under his command*.

Charles had begun his march from Saxony with 45,000 men, Lewenhaupt had brought upwards of 16,000 out of Livonia, and yet scarce a handful of men were left of all this powerful army: of a numerous train of artillery, part were lost in his marches, and part buried in the morasses; he had now remaining only eighteen brass cannon, two haubitzes, and twelve mortars; and with this inconsiderable force, he had undertaken the siege of Pultowa, and had attacked an army provided with a formidable artillery. Therefore he is, with justice, accused of having shewn more courage than prudence, after his leaving Germany. On the side of the Russians, there were no more than fifty-two officers, and 1294 private men killed; an undeniable proof, that the disposition of the Russian troops was better than those of Charles, and that their fire was infinitely superior to that of the Swedes.

We find, in the memoirs of a foreign minister to the court of Russia, that Peter being informed of

* The Memoirs of Peter the Great, by the pretended boyar Iwan Nesteturanoy, printed at Amsterdam in 1739, say, that the king of Sweden, before he passed the Boristhenes, sent a general officer with proposals of peace to the czar. The four volumes of these memoirs are either a collection of untruths and absurdities, or compilations from common news papers.

Charles's design to take refuge in Turkey, wrote a friendly letter to him, entreating him not to take so desperate a resolution, but rather to trust himself into his hands, than in those of the natural enemy to all Christian princes. He gave him, at the same time, his word of honour not to detain him prisoner, but to terminate all their differences by a reasonable peace. This letter was sent by an express as far as the river Bug, which separates the deserts of the Ukraine from the Grand Seignor's dominions. As the messenger did not reach that place, till Charles had entered Turkey, he brought back the letter to his master. The same minister adds further, that he had this account from the very person who was charged with the letter*. This anecdote is not altogether improbable, but I do not meet with it either in Peter's journals, or in any of the papers intrusted to my care. What is of greater importance in relation to this battle, was, its being the only one of the many that have stained the earth with blood, that instead of producing only destruction, has proved beneficial to mankind, by enabling the czar to civilize so considerable a part of the world.

There have been more than two hundred pitched battles fought in Europe from the commencement of this century, to the present year. The most signal, and the most bloody victories, have produced no other consequences, than the reduction of a few provinces, ceded afterwards by treaties, and retaken again by other battles. Armies of an hundred thousand men have frequently engaged each other in the field; but the greatest ef-

* This fact is likewise found in a letter, printed before the anecdotes of Russia, page 23.



forts have been attended with only slight and momentary successes ; the most trivial causes have been productive of the greatest effects. There is no instance in modern history of any war that has compensated by a greater good for the many evils it has occasioned ; but, from the battle of Pultowa, the greatest empire under the sun has derived its present happiness and prosperity.

C H A P. XIX.

The Consequences of the battle of PULTOWA.
CHARLES XII takes refuge among the Turks.
AUGUSTUS, whom he had dethroned, recovers his dominions. Conquests of **PETER the Great.**

The years 1709 and 1710.

THE chief prisoners of rank were now presented to the conqueror, who ordered their swords to be returned, and invited them to dinner. It is a well known fact, that, on drinking to the officers, he said, "To the health of my " masters in the art of war " However most of his masters, particularly the subaltern officers, and all the private men, were soon afterwards sent into Siberia. There was no cartel established here for exchange of prisoners between the Russians and Swedes ; the czar indeed had proposed one before the siege of Pultowa, but Charles rejected the offer, and his troops were in every thing the victims of his inflexible pride.

It was this unseasonable obstinacy that occasioned all the misfortunes of this prince in Turkey, and a series of adventures more becoming a hero of

romance than a wise or prudent king; for as soon as he arrived at Bender, he was advised to write to the Grand Vizir, as is the custom among the Turks; but this he thought would be demeaning himself too far. The like obstinacy embroiled him with all the ministers of the Porte one after another; in short, he knew not how to accommodate himself either to times or circumstances.

The first news of the battle of Pultowa produced a general revolution in Poland, Saxony, Sweden, and Silesia. Charles, while all powerful in those parts, had obliged the emperor Joseph to take an hundred and five churches from the Catholics in favour of the Sillians of the confession of Augsburg. The catholics there no sooner received news of the defeat of Charles, than they repudiated themselves of all the Lutheran temples. The Saxons now thought of nothing but being revenged for the extortions of a conqueror, who had robbed them, according to their own account, of twenty three millions of crowns.

The king of Poland their elector immediately protested against the abdication that they had been extorted from him *, and being now reconciled to the czar, he left no stone unturned to re-ascend the Polish throne. Sweden, overwhelmed with consternations, thought their king for a long time dead, and in this uncertainty the senate knew not what to resolve.

Peter in the mean time determined to make the best use of his victory, and therefore dispatched marshal Sheremetow with an army into Livonia, on the frontiers of which province that general had so often signalized himself. Prince Menzikoff

* Aug. 8. 1709.

was sent in haste with a numerous body of cavalry to second the few troops left in Poland, to encourage the nobles who were in the interest of Augustus, to drive out his competitor, who was now considered as no better than a rebel, and to disperse a body of Swedes and troops that were still in that kingdom under the command of general Craffau.

The czar soon after sets out in person, marches through the province of Kiow, and the palatinates of Chelm and Upper Volhinia, and at length arrives at Lublin, where he concert's measures with the general of Lithuania. He then reviews the crown-troops, who all take the oath of allegiance to king Augustus; from thence he proceeds to Warsaw, and at Thera enjoyed the most glorious of all triumphs †, that of receiving the thanks of a king, whom he had reinstated in his dominions. There it was that he concluded a treaty against Sweden ‡, with the kings of Denmark, Poland, and Prussia; in which it was resolved to recover from Charles all the conquests of Gustavus Adolphus. Peter revived the ancient pretensions of the czars to Livonia, Ingria, Carelia, and part of Finland; Denmark laid claim to Scania, and the king of Prussia to Pomerania.

Thus had Charles XII by his unsuccessful valour, shook the noble edifice that had been erected by the prosperous bravery of his ancestor Gustavus Adolphus. The Polish nobility came in on all fides to renew their oaths to their king, or to ask pardon for having deserted him; and almost the whole kingdom acknowledg'd Peter for its protector.

† Sept. 18. 1709. ‡ Octob. 7. 1709.

To the victorious arms of the czar, to these new treaties, and to this sudden revolution, Stanislaus had nothing to oppose but a voluntary resignation: he published a writing called *Universale*, in which he declares himself ready to resign the crown, if the republic required it.

Peter having concerted all the necessary measures with the king of Poland, and rectified the treaty with Denmark, set out directly to finish his negotiation with the king of Prussia. It was not then usual for sovereign princes to perform the function of their own ambassadors. Peter was the first who introduced this custom, which has been followed by very few. The elector of Brandenburg, the first king of Prussia, had a conference with the czar at Marenverder, a small town situated in the western part of Pomerania, and built by the old Teutonic knights, and included in the limits of Prussia, lately erected into a kingdom. This country indeed was poor, and of a small extent; but its new king, whenever he travelled, displayed the utmost magnificence. With great splendor he had received czar Peter at his first passing through his dominions, when that prince quitted his empire to go in search of instructions among strangers. But he received the conqueror of Charles XII. in a still more pompous manner. Peter for this time concluded only a defensive treaty with him *, which afterwards, however, completed the ruin of Sweden.

Not one instant of time was lost. Peter having proceeded with the greatest dispatch in his negotiations, which elsewhere are wont to take up so much time, goes and joins his army then before

* Oct. 20. 1709.

Riga, the capital of Livonia. He began by bombarding the place, and fired off the three first bombs himself †; then changed the siege into a blockade, and when well assured, that Riga could not escape him, he repaired to his city of Petersburg, to inspect and forward the works carrying on there, the new buildings, and finishing of his fleet; and having laid the keel of a ship of 54 guns, with his own hands, he returns to Moscow ‡. Here he amused himself with assisting in the preparations for the triumphal entry, which he exhibited in that capital. He directed every thing relating to that festival, and was himself the principal contriver and architect.

He opened the year 1710 with this solemnity §, so necessary to his subjects, whom it inspired with notions of grandeur, and was highly pleasing to every one who had been fearful of seeing those enter their walls as conquerors, over whom they now triumphed. Seven magnificent arches were erected, under which passed the artillery, standards, and colours, taken from the enemy, with their officers, generals, and ministers, who had been made prisoners, all on foot, amidst the ringing of bells, the sound of trumpets, the discharge of an hundred pieces of cannon, and the acclamations of an innumerable concourse of people, whose voices rent the air as soon as the cannon ceased firing. The procession was closed by the victorious army, with the generals at its head; and Peter, who marched in his rank of major general. At each triumphal arch stood the deputies of the several orders of the state; and at the last was a chosen band of young gentlemen, the sons of boyars, clad

† Nov. 21. ‡ Dec. 3. § Jan. 1. 1710.

in Roman habits, who presented a crown of laurels to their victorious monarch.

This public festival was followed by another ceremony, which proved no less satisfactory than the former. In the year 1708 happened an accident the more disagreeable to Peter, as his aims were at that time unsuccessful. Mattheo of his ambassador to the court of London, having had his audience of leave of Queen Anne, was arrested for debt at the suit of some English merchants, and carried before a justice of peace to give security for the monies he owed there. The merchants insisted that the laws of commerce ought to prevail before the privileges of foreign ministers; the czar's ambassador, and with him all the public ministers, protested against this proceeding, alleging, that their persons ought to be always inviolable. The czar wrote to Queen Anne demanding satisfaction for the insult offered him in the person of his ambassador.

But the queen had it not in her power to gratify him, because, by the laws of England, tradesmen were allowed to prosecute their debtors, and there was no law that excepted public ministers from such prosecution. The murder of Patkul, the czar's ambassador, who had been executed the year before by the orders of Charles XII. had encouraged the English to shew so little regard to a character which had been so cruelly profaned. The other public ministers, who were then at the court of London, were obliged to be bound for the czar's ambassador; and at length, all the queen could do in his favour, was to prevail on her parliament to pass an act, by which no one for the future could arrest an ambassador for debt; but after the battle of Pultowa the English court thought proper to give satisfaction to the czar.

The queen made by a formal embassy an excuse for what had passed *. Mr. Whitworth the person charged with this commission, began his harangue with the following words, " Most High and mighty Emperor." He told the czar, that the person who had presumed to arrest his ambassador, had been imprisoned, and rendered infamous. There was no truth in all this, but it was sufficient that he said so; and the title of Emperor, which the queen had not given Peter before the battle of Pultowa, plainly shewed the consideration he had now acquired in Europe.

This title had been already granted him in Holland, not only by those who had been his fellow-workmen in dock-yards at Saardam, and seemed to interest themselves most in his glory, but likewise by the principal persons in the state, who unanimously stiled him Emperor, and made public rejoicings for his victory, even in the presence of the Swedish minister.

The universal reputation which he had acquired by his victory of Pultowa, was still further increased by his not suffering a moment to pass without making some advantages of it. In the first place, he laid siege to Elbing, a Hanse town of Royal Prussia in Poland, where the Swedes had still a garrison. The Russians scaled the walls, entered the town, and the garrison surrendered prisoners of war †. This was one of the largest magazines belonging to Charles XII. The conquerors found therein 183 brass cannon, and 157 mortars. Immediately after the reduction of Elbing || Peter re-

* Feb. 16. 1710.

† Afterwards created lord Whitworth, by George II.

‡ March 11. 1710. || April 2.

marched from Moscow to Petersburg as soon as he arrived at this latter place, he took shipping under his new fortress of Cronslot, coasted along the shore of Carelia, and notwithstanding a violent storm, brought his fleet safely before Wyburg, the capital of Carelia in Finland; while his land forces advanced over the frozen morasses, and in a short time the capital of Livonia beheld itself closely blockaded §; and after a breach was made in the walls, Wyburg surrendered, and the garrison, consisting of 4000 men, capitulated, but did not receive the honours of war, being made prisoners notwithstanding the capitulation. Peter charged the enemy with several infractions of this kind, and promised to set these troops at liberty, as soon as he should receive satisfaction from the Swedes for his complaints. On this occasion the King of Sweden was to be consulted, who continued as inflexible as ever; and those soldiers, whom by a little concession, he might have delivered from their confinement, remained in captivity. Thus did king William III. in 1695, arrest marshal Boufflers, notwithstanding the capitulation of Namur. There have been several instances of these violations of treaties; but it is to be wished, there never had been any.

After the taking of this capital, the blockade of Riga was soon changed into a regular siege, and pushed with vigour. They were obliged to break the ice on the river Dwina, which waters the walls of the city. An epidemical disorder, which had raged some time in these parts, now got amongst the besiegers, and carried off 9000; nevertheless the siege was not in the least slackened. It lasted a considerable time, but at length

§ June 23.

the garrison capitulated, and were allowed the honours of war *; but it was stipulated by the capitulation, that all the Livonian officers and soldiers should enter into the Russian service, as natives of a country that had been dismembered from that empire, and usurped by the ancestors of Charles XII. But the Livonians were restored to the privileges, of which his father had stript them, and all the officers entered into the czar's service. This was the most noble satisfaction that Peter could take for the murder of his ambassador Patkul, a Livonian, who had been put to death, for defending those privileges. The garrison consisted of near 5000 men. A short time afterwards the citadel of Dunamund was taken, and the besiegers found in the town and fort above 800 pieces of artillery of different kinds.

Nothing was now wanting to make Peter entirely master of the provinces of Carelia, but the possession of the strong town of Kexholm, built on an island in the lake of Ladoga, and deemed impregnable: it was bombarded soon after, and surrendered in a short time *. The island of Oetel in the sea, bordering upon the north of Livonia, was subdued with the same rapidity †.

On the side of Estonia, a province of Livonia, towards the north, and on the gulph of Finland, are the towns of Pernau and Revel: by the reduction of these Peter compleated the conquest of all Livonia. Pernau surrendered after a siege of a few days ‡, and Revel capitulated without waiting to have a single cannon fired against it §; but the besieged found means to escape out of the hands of the conquerors, at the very time they were sur-

* July 15.

• Sep. 19. 1710. † Sep. 23. ‡ Aug. 25. § Sep. 12.

rendering themselves prisoners of war : for some Swedish ships having anchored in the road, under favour of the night, the garrison and most of the citizens embarked on board, and when the besiegers entered the town, they were surprised to find it deserted. When Charles XII gained the victory of Narva, little did he expect that his troops would one day be driven to use such artifices.

In Poland, Stanislaus finding his army entirely ruined, had taken refuge in Pomerania, which still belonged to Charles XII. Augustus resumed the government, and it was difficult to decide who had acquired most glory, Charles in dethroning him, or Peter in restoring him to his crown.

The subjects of the king of Sweden were still more unfortunate than that monarch himself. The contagious distemper, which had made such havock over Livonia, passed from thence into Sweden ; where, in the city of Stockholm, it carried off thirty thousand persons ; it likewise desolated the provinces already thinned of their inhabitants ; for during the space of ten years successively, most of the able bodied men had quitted their country to follow their master, and perished in foreign climes.

Charles's ill fortune pursued him also in Pomerania : his army had retired thither from Poland, to the number of 11,000. The czar, the kings of Denmark and Prussia, the elector of Hanover, and the duke of Holstein, joined together to render this army useless, and to compel general Craffau, who commanded it, to submit to a neutrality. The regency of Stockholm hearing no news of their king, and distracted by the mortality that raged in that city, were glad to sign this neutrality, which seemed to deliver one of its provinces at least from

the horrors of war. The emperor of Germany favored this extraordinary convention, by which it was stipulated, that the Swedish army then in Pomerania should not march from thence to assist their monarch in any other part of the world; nay, it was furthermore resolved in the German empire, to raise an army to enforce the execution of this unparalleled convention. The reason of this was, that the emperor of Germany, who was then at war with France, was in hopes to engage the Swedish army to enter into his service. This whole negotiation was carried on while Peter was subduing Livonia, Estonia and Carelia.

Charles XII who was all this time at Bender, putting every spring in motion to engage the divan to declare war against the czar, received this news as one of the severest blows his untoward fortune had dealt him: he could not brook, that his senate at Stockholm should pretend to tie up the hands of his army; and it was on this occasion that he wrote them word, he would send one of his boots to govern them.

The Danes, in the mean time, were making preparations to invade Sweden; so that every nation in Europe was now engaged in war. Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, Germany, Holland, and England, were contending for the dominions left by Charles II of Spain; and the whole north was up in arms against Charles XII. There wanted only a quarrel with the Ottoman empire, for every village in Europe to be exposed to the ravages of war. This quarrel happened soon afterwards, when Peter had attained to the summit of his glory, and precisely for that reason.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.



